United Nations A/55/PV.33

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

33rd plenary meeting
Thursday, 12 October 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 15 (*continued*)

Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs

(b) Election of eighteen members of the Economic and Social Council

The President: This morning, the General Assembly will proceed to the election of 18 members of the Economic and Social Council to replace those members whose term of office expires on 31 December 2000.

The 18 outgoing members are Algeria, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Colombia, the Comoros, India, Italy, Lesotho, Mauritius, New Zealand, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Saint Lucia, Sierra Leone, the United States of America and Viet Nam.

As of 1 January 2001, the following States will continue to be represented on the Economic and Social Council: Angola, Austria, Bahrain, Benin, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Fiji, France, Germany, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Suriname, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Sudan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Venezuela. The names of these 36 States should therefore not appear on the ballots.

In accordance with paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 2847 (XXVI) of 20 December 1971, and taking into account the number of States that will remain members of the Council after 1 January 2001, the 18 members should be elected as follows: five from African States, four from Asian States, two from Eastern European States, three from Latin American and Caribbean States and four from Western European and other States. The ballot papers reflect this pattern.

I should like to inform the Assembly that those candidates, their number not exceeding the number of seats to be filled, receiving the greatest number of votes and a two-thirds majority of those present and voting will be declared elected. In the case of a tie vote for a remaining seat, there will be a restricted ballot limited to those candidates that have obtained an equal number of votes.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to that procedure?

It was so decided

The President: In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, the election shall be held by secret ballot, and there shall be no nominations.

Regarding candidatures, the Chairmen of the respective regional Groups have informed the Secretariat that, for the five vacant seats from among the African States, the Group has endorsed five candidates: Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda.

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00-68457 (E)

For the four vacant seats from among the Asian States, there are six candidates: the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and the United Arab Emirates.

For the two vacant seats from among the Eastern European States, the Group has endorsed two candidates: Georgia and Romania.

For the three vacant seats from among the Latin American and Caribbean States, there are four candidates. They are Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago.

For the four vacant seats from among the Western European and other States, the Group has endorsed four candidates: Andorra, Italy, the Netherlands and the United States of America.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, we shall now proceed to the election by secret ballot.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting.

I should like to seek the usual cooperation of representatives during the time of the conduct of the election. As members are all aware, once the voting begins, all campaigning should cease on the main floor of the General Assembly Hall. This means in particular that, until the election is completed, no more campaign material can be distributed inside the Hall and all representatives are requested to remain at their seats.

Ballot papers marked "A", "B", "C", "D" and "E" will now be distributed. I request representatives to use only those ballot papers and to write on them the names of the States for which they wish to vote.

A ballot paper containing more names from the relevant region than the number of seats assigned to it will be declared invalid. Names of Member States on a ballot paper that do not belong to that region will not be counted at all.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Holliday (Australia), Mr. Jara (Chile), Ms. Nangula (Namibia), Mr. Priputen (Slovakia) and Ms. Upakarnitikaset (Thailand) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 10.25 a.m. and resumed at 12.05 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group A – African States

Number of ballot papers:	166
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	165
Abstentions:	5
Number of members voting:	160
Required two-thirds majority:	107
Number of votes obtained:	
Egypt	157
Ethiopia	155
Nigeria	152
South Africa	152
Uganda	141
Tunisia	1
Swaziland	1

Group B – Asian States

Number of ballot papers:	166
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	165
Abstentions:	1
Number of members voting:	164
Required two-thirds majority:	110
Number of votes obtained:	
Pakistan	125
Republic of Korea	115
Nepal	104
Islamic Republic of Iran	103
United Arab Emirates	95
Philippines	89
Kyrgyzstan	1

Group C – Eastern European States

Number of ballot papers:	166
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	165
Abstentions:	7
Number of members voting:	158
Required two-thirds majority:	106
Number of votes obtained:	
Romania	152
Georgia	148
Poland	7
Lithuania	1

Group D – Latin American and Caribbean States

Number of ballot papers:	166
Number of invalid ballots:	2
Number of valid ballots:	164
Abstentions:	1
Number of members voting:	163
Required two-thirds majority:	109
Number of votes obtained:	
Brazil	122
Peru	115
Argentina	113
Trinidad and Tobago	106
Guatemala	1
Haiti	1

Group E – Western European and other States

Number of ballot papers:	166
Number of invalid ballots:	2
Number of valid ballots:	164
Abstentions:	4
Number of members voting:	160
Required two-thirds majority:	107
Number of votes obtained:	
Andorra	156
Italy	156
United States of America	148
Netherlands	147

Having obtained the required two-thirds majority, Andorra, Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, Italy, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, the Republic of Korea, Romania, South Africa, Uganda and the United States of America were elected members of the Economic and Social Council for a three-year term beginning 1 January 2001.

The President: There remain two seats to be filled from among the Asian States. We shall therefore proceed to the first restricted ballot.

The second round of balloting shall be restricted to the four States from among the Asian States that were not elected but obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal, the Philippines and the United Arab Emirates.

This is in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

Ballot papers marked "B" will now be distributed. May I ask representatives to write on the ballot papers the names of the States for which they wish to vote.

Ballot papers marked "B", for the Asian States, will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal, the Philippines or the United Arab Emirates, as well as if they contain the names of more than two States.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Holliday (Australia), Ms. Batselwang (Botswana), Mr. Jara (Chile), Mr. Priputen (Slovakia) and Ms. Upakarnitikaset (Thailand) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Mr. Shihab (Maldives), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was suspended at 12.20 p.m. and resumed at 12.50 p.m.

The Acting President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group B – Asian States

Number of ballot papers:	171
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	171
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	171
Required two-thirds majority:	114
Number of votes obtained:	
Nepal	109
Islamic Republic of Iran	99
United Arab Emirates	67
Philippines	58

The Acting President: Since no candidate obtained the required two-thirds majority in the previous ballot, there still remain two seats to be filled from among the Asian States. We shall therefore proceed to a second restricted ballot.

The third round of balloting shall be restricted to the four States from among the Asian States that were not elected but that obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal, the Philippines and the United Arab Emirates.

This is in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

I give the floor to the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. Mabilangan (Philippines): In order to be of help to the Assembly, the Philippines is withdrawing from the election. I would like to thank those who supported us by voting for the Philippines.

The Acting President: I thank the representative of the Philippines for his cooperation.

Taking into account the statement made by the representative of the Philippines, we shall proceed to the current restricted ballot in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

We shall now begin the voting process.

Ballot papers marked "B" will now be distributed. May I ask representatives to write on the ballot papers the names of the States for which they wish to vote.

Ballot papers marked "B", for the Asian States, will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal, the Philippines or the United Arab Emirates, as well as if they contain the names of more than two States.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Holliday (Australia), Ms. Batselwang (Botswana), Mr. Priputen (Slovakia) and Ms. Upakarnitikaset (Thailand) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 1 p.m. and resumed at 1.25 p.m.

The Acting President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group B – Asian States	
Number of ballot papers	168
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	168
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	168
Required two-thirds majority:	112
Number of votes obtained:	
Nepal	136
Islamic Republic of Iran	129
United Arab Emirates	61

Having obtained the required two-thirds majority, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Nepal were elected members of the Economic and Social Council for a three-year term beginning 1 January 2001.

The Acting President: The following 18 States have thus been elected members of the Economic and Social Council for a three-year term beginning 1 January 2001: Andorra, Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, the Republic of Korea, Romania, South Africa, Uganda and the United States of America.

I congratulate those States which have been elected members of the Economic and Social Council, and I thank the tellers for their assistance in this election.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.34

General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

34th plenary meeting
Monday, 16 October 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

President Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 7

Notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations

Note by the Secretary-General (A/55/366)

The President: As members are aware, in accordance with the provisions of Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations, and with the consent of the Security Council, the Secretary-General is mandated to notify the General Assembly of matters relative to the maintenance of international peace and security that are being dealt with by the Security Council and of matters with which the Council has ceased to deal.

In this connection, the General Assembly has before it a note by the Secretary-General issued as document A/55/366.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of that document?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 16

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

(a) Election of seven members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination

Note by the Secretary-General (A/55/379)

The President: Pursuant to General Assembly decision 42/450 of 17 December 1987, the Assembly elects the members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination upon their nomination by the Economic and Social Council.

The Assembly has before it document A/55/379, which contains the nominations by the Economic and Social Council to fill the vacancies in the Committee that will occur as a result of the expiration on 31 December 2000 of the terms of office of the Bahamas, France, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Uganda, the United States of America and Zambia.

Those States are eligible for immediate re-election.

I should like to remind members that after 1 January 2001 the following States will still be members of the Committee: Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Cameroon, China, the Comoros, Cuba, Egypt, Gabon, Germany, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Japan, Mauritania, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,

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00-69189 (E)

Uruguay and Zimbabwe. Therefore, those 27 States are not eligible in this election.

I should now like to inform members that the following States have been nominated by the Economic and Social Council.

The two African States for two vacancies are Botswana and the United Republic of Tanzania. The one Eastern European State for one vacancy is the Russian Federation. The two Latin American and Caribbean States for two vacancies are the Bahamas and Mexico. The two Western European and other States for two vacancies are France and the United States of America.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, all elections should be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations. I should like to recall paragraph 16 of decision 34/401, whereby the practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled should become standard, unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.

In the absence of such a request, may I take it that the Assembly decides to proceed to the election on that basis?

It was so decided.

The President: The number of States nominated from among the African States, the Eastern European States, the Latin American and Caribbean States and the Western European and other States is equal to the number of seats to be filled in each of those groups.

May I therefore take it that the Assembly wishes to declare those States nominated by the Economic and Social Council from among the African States, the Eastern European States, the Latin American and Caribbean States and the Western European and other States — namely, the Bahamas, Botswana, France, Mexico, the Russian Federation, the United Republic of Tanzania and the United States of America — elected members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2001?

It was so decided.

The President: I congratulate the States that have been elected members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

We have thus concluded our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 16.

(b) Election of seventeen members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law

The President: The General Assembly will now turn to the election of 17 members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law to replace those members whose term of office expires on 24 June 2001.

The 17 outgoing members are Algeria, Australia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, Singapore and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Those members are eligible for immediate re-election.

I should like to remind members that as of 25 June 2001 the following States will continue to be represented on the Commission: Argentina and Uruguay alternating for one seat, Austria, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Fiji, Honduras, Hungary, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Kenya, Lithuania, Paraguay, Romania, Spain, the Sudan, Thailand, Uganda and the United States of America.

Therefore, those 20 States are not eligible.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, all elections should be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations. I should like to recall paragraph 16 decision 34/401, whereby the practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled should become standard, unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.

In the absence of such a request, may I take it that the Assembly decides to proceed to the election on that basis?

It was so decided.

The President: I shall now read the names of the candidates endorsed by the regional groups.

For the five seats from among the African States, the five endorsed candidates are Benin, Cameroon, Morocco, Rwanda and Sierra Leone.

For the three seats from among the Asian States, the three endorsed candidates are China, Japan and Singapore.

For the two seats from among the Eastern European States, the two endorsed candidates are the Russian Federation and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

For the two seats from among the Latin American and Caribbean States, the two endorsed candidates are Brazil and Mexico.

For the five seats from among the Western European and other States, the five endorsed candidates are Canada, France, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Since the number of candidates endorsed by the African States, the Asian States, the Eastern European States, the Latin American and Caribbean States and the Western European and other States corresponds to the number of seats to be filled in each group, I declare those candidates elected for a six-year term beginning on 25 June 2001.

I congratulate the following States which have been elected members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law for a six-year term beginning on 25 June 2001: Benin, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sweden, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

This concludes our consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 16.

Agenda item 17

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(b) Appointment of members of the Committee on Contributions

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/424)

The President: In paragraph 5 of the report contained in document A/55/424, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint Mr. Wu Gang of China as a member of the Committee on Contributions for a term of office beginning on 16 October 2000 and ending on 31 December 2002.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint the person recommended?

It was so decided.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 17.

Programme of work

The President: I wish to inform members that at the request of the parties concerned, consideration of agenda item 36, entitled "Bethlehem 2000", originally scheduled for this morning, is postponed to a later date to be announced.

The meeting rose at 10.15 a.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.35

General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

35th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 17 October 2000, at 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 8 *(continued)*

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: reports of the General Committee

Third report of the General Committee
(A/55/250/Add.2)

The President: I should like to draw the attention of representatives to the third report of the General Committee, document A/55/250/Add.2, concerning the following three requests: first, a request by the Netherlands for the inclusion in the agenda of an additional item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons"; secondly, a request by several countries for the inclusion in the agenda of an additional item entitled "Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit"; and a request by a number of countries for the inclusion in the agenda of an additional item entitled "Peace, security and reunification on the Korean peninsula".

In paragraph 1 of the report, the General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that an additional item, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons", should be included in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include this additional item in the agenda of the current session?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Committee further decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the additional item should be considered directly in plenary meeting.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to consider this item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 2 of the report, the General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that an additional item, entitled "Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit", should be included in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include this additional item in the agenda of the current session?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Committee further decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the additional item should be considered directly in plenary meeting.

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00-69498 (E)

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to consider this item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided

The President: In paragraph 3 of the report, the General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that an additional item, entitled "Peace, security and reunification on the Korean peninsula", should be included in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include this additional item in the agenda of the current session?

It was so decided

The President: The General Committee further decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the additional item should be considered directly in plenary meeting.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to consider this item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided

Agenda item 11

Report of the Security Council (A/55/2)

The President: I give the floor to the President of the Security Council, Mr. Martin Andjaba, to introduce the report of the Security Council.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): It is with great pleasure that I introduce the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, in document A/55/2, covering the period from 16 June 1999 to 15 June 2000.

The report clearly shows the intensity of the Security Council's working agenda dur.ng the reporting period. During the year under review, the Council held 144 formal meetings, adopted 57 resolutions ano issued 38 statements by the President. In addition, the Council members held 194 consultations of the whole. The Council also considered over 85 reports by the Secretary-General and reviewed and processed more than 1,165 documents and communications from States and regional and other international organizations. Furthermore, the Council dispatched four missions to various conflict areas.

In line with its primary responsibility under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council considered a wide range of issues. Ensuring stability in Africa and other regions has remained high on the agenda of the Council. With regard to Africa, the Council extensively considered situations in Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Eritrea/Ethiopia, Somalia, Burundi and Western Sahara. In this connection, Security Council missions were dispatched to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Eritrea/Ethiopia. Peacekeeping operations in Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic have been successfully transformed into post-conflict peace-building support offices.

The Security Council also considered conflict situations in the Middle East, East Timor; Afghanistan; Tajikistan; Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and Abkhazia, Georgia. Missions were dispatched to East Timor and Kosovo.

The Security Council considered decisions and adopted statements on a number of broad peace and security issues, including the protection of civilians in armed conflict; children and armed conflict; and disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants. It also considered HIV/AIDS and international peace and security. In dealing with these matters the Security Council remained highly conscious of its responsibility and of the role being played by other United Nations bodies.

During the reporting period the Security Council went to great lengths to conduct its business in a more transparent manner. In this regard, many open meetings and briefings were held with the participation of the wider membership of the United Nations.

The members of the Security Council trust that the report will shed more light and provide useful information on the activities of the Council during the year. They attach utmost significance and importance to this annual considerati·n of the report by the General Assembly as a means of enhancing further the work of these two principal organs of the United Nations. The members of the Security Council look forward to the comments and suggestions of the Member States during this meeting.

Let me conclude by expressing the appreciation of the members of the Security Council to the staff of the Security Council secretariat for their dedication and

tireless efforts, which remain indispensable to the efficiency of the work of the Security Council.

Mr. Ling (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of the Republic of Belarus thanks Ambassador Andjaba of Namibia for having introduced the annual report of the Security Council to the current session of the General Assembly. We would also like to take note of the important role played last year by Namibia in the work of the Council.

Belarus is convinced that the annual reporting practice of the Security Council remains an important part of the efforts to make the activities of the Council as open and transparent as possible, as well as to allow the Member States to adequately evaluate the decisions taken by the Council in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security.

The work of the Security Council was particularly involved last year, given the numerous conflicts in Kosovo, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other regions of the world. The Council's efforts were crucial to the maintenance of international peace and security. The international community saw the Council adopt many important decisions and resolutions, as reflected in the present report.

The delegation of the Republic of Belarus notes with satisfaction that the Council is examining more and more subjects besides current conflicts. Increasingly, the Council considers the root causes that lead to crises and military confrontation. Last year we witnessed the Council's important debates on the participation of children in armed conflicts, the reintegration of ex-combatants, international terrorism and the illicit trafficking of diamonds and other natural resources — a trade that has been used not for promoting peace, but to support forces involved in conflicts.

Last year, problems relating to sanctions were a special part of the Council's work. We welcome the fact that the practice in this field of the principal United Nations organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security has became more sophisticated. The extremely complex humanitarian situations in Iraq and in other States on which sanctions have been imposed continue to call for further work to reduce the negative impact of sanctions on civilians. In this context, the Republic of Belarus notes the particular importance of the inclusion in the annual report of the reports of the sanctions committees, whose operations had until now been absolutely closed to the majority of States. Belarus supports the continuation of this practice.

Belarus welcomes the fact noted in the report that, compared with the previous period, the Council held significantly more open meetings last year. This is undoubtedly an important step in making the Council's work more transparent. Belarus will support all further measures that allow non-member States to participate more fully in the Council's deliberations on all issues. In this context, we consider that the next important step could be publishing as press releases issued from United Nations Headquarters the content of the daily briefings that give an account of the closed consultations of the Council.

We believe that the summaries that the Council members prepare regarding the work of the Council during their presidencies are of crucial importance. Belarus believes that these summaries facilitate a more profound analysis of the Council's work and the finding of new ways to improve the work of the Council.

The Millennium Summit and the high-level Security Council meeting demonstrated to the world the unanimity of the Member States with regard to the priority role of the Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. Strong adherence to the Charter's principles in this regard is, we believe, the way to ensure that future generations are spared the scourge of war. Belarus will be submitting its candidacy for a non-permanent seat in the Council for 2002-2003 on the basis of its firm commitment to the fulfilment of the provisions of the Millennium Declaration adopted by the heads of States and Governments and its commitment to work vigorously to further improve the Council's work.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): I wish to thank the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Martin Andjaba of Namibia, for his presentation of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly.

We have often heard the Council reiterating that it has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as that it has the authority to act on behalf of all Member States in carrying out its duties in fulfilment of this responsibility. These are very important provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and it is precisely these provisions that made the Security Council into

the most powerful organ of the United Nations system. However, it is equally essential to recall that this unique authority was delegated to the Security Council in conjunction with its obligation to report regularly to the General Assembly. Article 24 of the Charter is very clear about this link.

Ukraine attaches particular importance to the item "Report of the Security Council", as it has always believed that its main purpose was to uphold the principle of accountability, which we consider fundamental to the effectiveness of the Organization's activities in the area of peace and security. This is the first time that Ukraine has made its contribution to this important discussion as an elected member of the Council.

Indeed, consideration of this agenda item offers the General Assembly a unique opportunity to make a comprehensive assessment of the Council's activities over the past year. My delegation believes that if we evaluate this period from the larger perspective of the past decade, we may find many reasons to characterize it as the promising beginning of a new phase in the Security Council's history.

The significant shift in peacekeeping activities could be one of the most convincing arguments in support of that assertion. According to the Secretary-General's latest report on the work of the Organization, the size of the Council's authorized deployment has almost tripled over the past 12 months, standing now at approximately 45,000 uniformed personnel.

The significant increase in peacekeeping operations, as well as some serious setbacks on the ground, initiated the current efforts to improve the effectiveness of this key instrument available to the United Nations in discharging its responsibility for peace and security. Ukraine will continue encouraging the Council to make a major contribution to this endeavour.

We may also recall how harshly the Security Council was criticized not so long ago for its lack of response to the demands of the African continent. Today, we have ample evidence of the major drift in the Council's overall policy towards Africa. The changes are really tangible. The substantially expanded United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, the authorization of the second phase of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the deployment of the United Nations Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia and the Council's action on the report by the Panel of Experts on Violations of Security Council Sanctions against UNITA are only some of the Council's highlights related to Africa.

The major task ahead is to sustain this action-oriented stance of the Council towards Africa and to focus it on preventing the recurrence or further aggravation of conflicts. It is high time to think in more practical terms about strengthening the overall capacity of the United Nations for effective preventive action. In this connection, I would like to reiterate the proposal put forward by President Kuchma of Ukraine that a comprehensive conflict prevention strategy be developed for the United Nations. Ukraine has made a number of suggestions as to what could become concrete elements of such a strategy. In particular, one of its key components could be the establishment of United Nations regional centres for conflict prevention. Another integral element could be conflict prevention operations, which should gain prominence as a qualitatively new model of peacekeeping activities.

In this regard, let me draw the Assembly's attention to the increasing impact of the conflict in Sierra Leone and its further spillover into the neighbouring countries, in particular Guinea. The international community must be prepared to act in urgent support of the intention of the Economic Community of West African States to prepare for the preventive deployment of an observer force on the borders of the Mano River Union countries.

Another important change in the Security Council's work over the past year is the rebirth of its special missions to conflict areas, which have been dispatched over the past 12 months to East Timor, Kosovo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Eritrea/Ethiopia. The recently completed mission to Sierra Leone — the largest ever such mission of the Security Council — proved that this instrument has become indispensable to the effective discharge of that organ's responsibilities.

We have also seen the Security Council starting to rethink its overall policy with regard to economic sanctions in order to improve their effectiveness as well as avoid their negative side effects. In April 2000, the Council established a working group on sanctions to develop relevant recommendations on those matters. In May 2000, the Council set an important precedent

by defining time limits for sanctions at the stage of their imposition. Ukraine believes that it is very important to ensure that the new trends in this domain bring about a clear and coherent methodology for the imposition and lifting of sanctions that takes into consideration the concerns of civilian populations and the interests of third countries.

Although the list of new developments and changes I have referred to is far from complete, I think it gives enough grounds to state that the work of the Security Council during the past year represents a clear step forward. This assessment is even more convincing if we recall the Council's record from June 1998 to June 1999. It was marked by a set of disappointments that made the larger international community question the ability of the Council to play a leading role in the maintenance of international peace and security and to respond adequately to emerging crises and other challenges.

It is very important now to sustain these very encouraging trends in the Council's activities into the future. A significant contribution to this major task was made by the Security Council Summit held on 7 September 2000. The results of that important meeting represent a vivid demonstration of the Security Council's willingness to remain a functioning and indispensable actor in international affairs in the new century. Ukraine will pay special attention to the practical implementation of the Security Council Summit commitments.

I would also like to use this occasion to restate Ukraine's determination to continue upholding by practical deeds its responsible status as a current member of the Security Council. Ukraine is redeeming its pledge to the member States of the General Assembly, which conferred on it the high honour of serving on the Council. I would like to stress that, for the past year, there has been no single newly established or substantially expanded peacekeeping operation — from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Sierra Leone, southern Lebanon, Kosovo, East Timor and Ethiopia and Eritrea — to which Ukraine has not contributed trained and properly equipped personnel.

I would like to conclude by offering our warm congratulations to Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore on their recent election to serve on the Security Council as of 1 January 2001. Ukraine is looking forward to close and productive cooperation with the newly elected members of the Council and wishes them every success in discharging their very important responsibilities.

Mr. Sharma (India): May I begin by thanking the President of the Security Council for introducing the report of the Council. I congratulate Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore on their election last week to the Council.

All Member States have a deep interest in the work of the Security Council and we attach importance to this discussion, mandated by Articles 24 (3) and 15 of the Charter, which require the Council to submit and the General Assembly to receive and consider annual and special reports. The Charter clearly intends that the Council, to which the general membership entrusts special responsibilities, should report to it each year on the issues and situations pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security it has dealt with, what it has done and the impact of its actions. It is expected that these reports should be comprehensive, substantive and forthright.

Unfortunately, the Council's reports still lack both substance and candour. Frustration with the Council's sketchy reporting led to the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 51/193 of 1996, in which it called upon the Council, inter alia, to include information on the consultations of the whole; to highlight the extent to which resolutions of the General Assembly on issues falling within the scope of the General Assembly and the Security Council had been taken into account by the Council in its decision-making; and to strengthen further the section in the report on the steps taken by the Council to improve its working methods.

The Council has ignored this resolution. The report before us, a 550-page to me, is, like its predecessors, simply a compilation of documents, most of which have already been circulated as official documents. We ask the members of the Council to consider if the veil of secrecy which they draw over its work serves a purpose. To the general membership, it appears both lofty, because it flouts the expressed wishes of the General Assembly, and self-defeating, because it feeds suspicions that the Council is secretive because it evades disclosure. As to the revelations over which it may wish to draw a veil, one can draw from several choices: questions as to effectiveness,

selectiveness of engagement, pressure of domestic constituencies or narrow agendas.

If transparency were the guiding principle, the Council would not need to conduct most of its work in informal meetings, a mechanism not even mentioned in its provisional rules of procedure. Rule 48 states that unless it decides otherwise, the Security Council shall meet in public. The holding of informal meetings should be the exception and not the unwritten rule that it has become.

The Council might very well argue in defence that it now holds public debates under almost every presidency. This, however, would be perilously close to the Council telling the general membership to eat cake. When the general membership asked for open meetings of the Council, it did not want to turn the Council into a debating society, which is what it now becomes every once in a while; the membership wanted it, before it acted on matters of peace and security, to hear the views of countries outside the Council that might have a point to make, a perspective to share or advice to offer, which it would be useful and prudent to factor into and reflect in its decisions. The open debates of the Council have no bearing on the Council's decisions, and frequently they are also on issues outside its mandate. As decisions are taken before the Council hears the views of others, the statements made are of academic interest, a mere formality. The Council needs to consider what purpose these open debates serve, if any. We asked the Council to be transparent; what is offered is symbolism.

Once again, sadly, the suspicion is not far-fetched that the closed doors of the Council may reflect a closed mind and a fear of being told truths it would much rather do without, of being given facts that contradict its preferences or of accepting advice that undermines its settled orientation. Nowhere does this create more of a problem than in the complex peacekeeping operations it has set up. The Council decides, in what is essentially splendid isolation, how an operation should evolve; it certainly has the right to do so under the Charter, but since the tasks it sets have to be discharged by the forces on the ground, it would be sensible to consult troop contributors and profit from their experience. Instead, the Council only goes through the motions, speaking to the troop contributors the day before a resolution is adopted. This is merely the courteous presentation of a fait accompli; it serves little purpose — not the Council's, not the host country's, not those of the troop contributors and certainly not those of the operation.

In May and June this year, when the Council held closed meetings, including a private meeting with the Ministers of the Economic Community of West African States to address the crisis in the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), India and other troop contributors asked that we be invited to it. We thought the Council would be anxious to hear the views of the countries most heavily involved, and were astonished that our request was turned down. We have never been told why. This indifferent treatment is unacceptable when it is troop contributors, and not the members of the Council, including those who believe that they have a special responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, that put the lives of their troops on the line for the cause of the United Nations.

Peacekeeping operations mandated by the Council will be successful only if their tasks are doable and they are given adequate resources. A partnership between the Council and the peacekeepers is not just crucial, but a prerequisite. This indeed is the spirit of Article 44 of the Charter. And it is no surprise that the Brahimi Panel report, which was welcomed at the Council's Summit on 7 September, has also recommended this. We hope that the Council will do some soul-searching and, in the future, will genuinely involve the troop-contributing countries, in a spirit of partnership, in decisions regarding peacekeeping operations, including on their mandates. The recent private meeting between troop contributors and the Council on UNAMSIL is a good precedent. However, it is not enough only to give troop contributors a hearing; their views should be reflected, if they are reasonable, in the mandates of the Council. The Council should institutionalize this mechanism.

The situation in Afghanistan remains a cause of deep anxiety to the international community, particularly to the countries in the region. The Taliban's quest for a military solution, their support for international terrorism and their utter disregard for the humanitarian crisis they have created in Afghanistan all continue. We are concerned over both the suffering they have inflicted on the Afghan people and their destabilizing role in the region. The Security Council, which has repeatedly expressed grave concern over the developments in Afghanistan, has urged the Taliban to seek a peaceful solution to the crisis and to end its

support for terrorism, but to no avail. Security Council resolution 1267 (1999) was adopted over a year ago, but the Taliban remain intransigent. This is a challenge to the Council.

Even as the Council has not lived up to expectations regarding its activities in maintaining international peace and security, particularly in Africa, it has continued to try to assume a role for itself in areas such as health, the welfare of children and humanitarian assistance, which are clearly beyond its mandate and fall under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly. This does not help the smooth functioning of the United Nations.

A case in point is the Council's assuming for itself the power to set up judicial bodies. Nothing under the Charter gives it the right to set up the tribunals that it has, nor indeed can it be demonstrated that those set up have in fact contributed to the maintenance of peace and security. In fact, they have on occasion become a complicating factor, and it would be hard to justify the exponential rise in the cost of maintaining them. There is now the piquant development of the recommendation to the Security Council from the Presidents of the two Tribunals that financial provisions should be made to recompense those who might have been unfairly accused before them; potentially, therefore, the General Assembly could be looking at huge sums of money which would have to be found to compensate persons wrongfully brought before tribunals which were wrongfully set up. Again, the General Assembly would be merely a passive and helpless spectator, without a role to play, except to accept the financial implications of decisions arbitrarily taken by the Council. These are systemic problems that surely need to be addressed.

Many of the flaws in the functioning of the Council are structural. Its composition and structure are demonstrably out of touch with ground realities. The Council neither reflects nor represents the aspirations and views of the larger membership. It is a relic of a defunct era. The solution lies in reforming and restructuring the Council. The inclusion of developing countries would make the Council more representative, relevant and responsive, enhancing the quality of its decisions and their acceptability within the general membership.

We have always believed that sanctions are a blunt instrument and should be carefully used when their imposition becomes imperative. Reports from the United Nations system about the humanitarian crisis caused by the sanctions on Iraq are disquieting. We have also seen the report by the Secretary-General that over 1,200 contracts worth over $2 billion under the oil-for-food programme are on hold. Clearly, the Council needs to address this issue with dispatch and sensitivity.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Only last month, our leaders met in this Hall to reaffirm their common commitment to the United Nations as our instrument of choice to strengthen and expand international cooperation as we enter the new millennium. It is with a view to building such a United Nations that we have offered our comments on the report of the Security Council.

Mr. Kastrup (Germany): The report of the Security Council has always been a comprehensive and long document which bears witness to the workload of the Council. All members of the Security Council therefore deserve our respect for shouldering this burden in exercising the duties conferred upon them by the Member States, under Article 24 of the Charter.

I would like to elaborate on three points. How can we really implement Article 24 and reform the relations between the Security Council and the general membership? How does the issue of Security Council reform relate to a peacekeeping reform, as initiated by the Brahimi report? And finally, how can we reform our own working culture and not let the principle of consensus stop all reform efforts?

One of the most obvious innovations in the Council's recent practice has been overlooked by the report, namely, the re-introduction of private meetings. I am not a psychologist who can give the Assembly an explanation for that. Since October of last year, I have been writing to the Presidents of the Security Council on a regular basis to ask them to allow non-members of the Council to participate in the Council's deliberations in cases where their interests are especially affected. Last January, I submitted a memorandum containing proposals on how such meetings could include a wider membership of the United Nations and yet remain confidential in character. That memorandum on the format and modalities of private meetings has been discussed in the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform. Some of the memorandum's

ideas were incorporated into this year's report of the Working Group.

The changes in the Security Council's procedures over the last year were quite significant. Instead of automatically coming together behind closed doors, the Council has moved towards being more open to the general membership. In some cases, interactive debates have taken place. In other cases, however, the non-members of the Council were not allowed to participate in the discussion, as provided for in the Council's provisional rules of procedure. I believe this development should receive closer attention in the future.

Statistics indicate that the tendency of the Security Council to meet behind closed doors is continuing. We deeply regret this, and I would like wholeheartedly to endorse everything that has been said about this problem by my Indian colleague. Therefore, two questions remain. How can parties involved be included prior to, and in, the actual consultations, and how can third parties with vital interests be enabled to participate in informal Security Council meetings? What types of procedures are available on a case-by-case basis without appearing arbitrary? This is not just a procedural or legal issue; it is, rather, a fundamental one. The more that especially affected countries are heard, the more legitimacy the Council's decisions will have and the more weight its resolutions will carry.

That brings me to my next point, namely, the Brahimi report and its linkage to the issue of Security Council reform. Among other things, the Brahimi Panel recommends that

> "The Security Council should leave in draft form resolutions authorizing missions with sizeable troop levels until such time as the Secretary-General has firm commitments of troops and other critical mission support elements, including peace-building elements, from Member States." (*A/55/305, para. 64 (b)*)

At a later stage, the reports states that

> "The Secretariat must tell the Security Council what it needs to know, not what it wants to hear, when formulating or changing mission mandates, and countries that have committed military units to an operation should have access to Secretariat briefings to the Council on matters affecting the safety and security of their personnel, especially those meetings with implications for a mission's use of force." (ibid., *para. 64 (d)*)

That is exactly the point that my Indian colleague has emphasized.

The Security Council should not only hear those Member States, but also take their views into consideration, the latter being the more important part of this communication exercise between the Security Council and the general membership. No Article of the Charter needs to be changed or amended for the Council to involve more Members in its deliberations and decision-making process on peacekeeping missions. As we all know, the Security Council is the master of its own procedures. That means that increasing the participation of a wider portion of the membership is a matter of political will.

After all, we are talking about the future of United Nations peacekeeping, which is the United Nations fundamental task, as well as the future of the United Nations as a whole. If there is no reform of the Security Council and its working methods, peacekeeping reform will remain incomplete.

The Secretary-General rightly stressed in his speech before the General Assembly on 12 September that

> "Consensus is highly desirable, but it need not mean waiting for absolute unanimity on every sub-clause among 189 Member States. The minority, often a very small minority, should not withhold its consent unreasonably. ... We can no longer afford to operate always at the level of the lowest, and slowest, common denominator." (*A/55/PV.10, p. 2*)

In practice, however, we do have to wait for that slowest common denominator, and important reform projects are being held hostage by a minority even though we can no longer afford to allow that to happen.

This year's deliberations of the Working Group on Security Council reform once again made it quite clear that because of the attitude of a minority it was not possible to agree on any substantial chapter in this year s report. The valuable efforts of both of our Vice-Chairmen, who had worked out an extremely well-balanced draft on general observations, were frustrated. Together with many other reform-minded

countries, we would have preferred the original version of the Vice-Chairmen's proposals. Fortunately, that original version has become an annex to the report, so the Bureau's assessment of the problems and perspectives of the reform debate are reflected in its entirety. I would recommend that everybody take a close look at this excellent paper and get an idea where we stand and where we might go from here.

We need not only a reform of the Security Council and of United Nations peacekeeping, but also of our own working methods. Seven years of reform debate are enough. Both the General Assembly and the Security Council should reform their working culture and methods and breathe life into the words they produce. Action, not words, are needed.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I wish to thank the President of the Security Council for the report he has submitted to the General Assembly at its present session. It contains comprehensive and detailed information about what the Security Council did in a working year that straddled two centuries. Today I take this opportunity to share my views on several issues, and on United Nations peacekeeping operations in particular.

Peacekeeping operations are an important means by which the United Nations fulfils its obligations with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security. On the one hand, the past year witnessed an increase in both the number and the scale of United Nations peacekeeping operations. On the other hand, such operations failed to yield the expected results in Sierra Leone and other places, highlighting to some extent the fact that such operations do indeed have problems that need to be solved immediately. We believe that it takes more than the political will of Member States and sufficient resources to strengthen the peacekeeping capacity of the United Nations. The Security Council should be more rational and more purpose-specific and case-specific in making decisions in this field.

First, better communication and consultation with the troop-contributing countries is crucial. Whether it is a matter of authorizing the deployment of a new peacekeeping mission or of amending the mandate of a current operation, the views of the contributors must be heeded and respected. Consultations should be conducted on a regular basis among the members of the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat on the situation on the ground, conditions of the deployed troops and other matters. Such communication can be carried out at a variety of levels; it can take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York and/or in the field, where the peacekeeping troops are deployed. The form of such communication should also be varied with a view to ensuring its effectiveness and efficiency.

Secondly, the Security Council must try to do a better job of pooling expertise and information in the decision-making process and in the review process. In that regard, on the one hand, the Secretariat should strengthen its capacity to collect, collate and analyse information so that it can supply the Security Council, in a timely manner, with accurate, comprehensive and reliable information concerning the situation on the ground and concerning specific needs for deployment. The Security Council, for its part, should also work hard to develop more channels of communication and to listen to information from a wider range of sources. In recent years, some of the Security Council missions to the sites of peacekeeping operations have been successful. They have helped the Security Council gain a comprehensive understanding of given situations and formulate solutions accordingly. The Security Council should therefore continue to do this in the future.

Thirdly, the Security Council should substantially improve its cooperation with the regional organizations and countries concerned to address hot-spot issues with a view to safeguarding regional stability. Those regional organizations and countries can often be pivotal to the solution of such issues, which, when mishandled can easily spill over to neighbouring countries and to the entire region. Therefore, when seeking solutions to such issues, the Security Council must have in mind the big picture of the whole region, must attach due importance to the views of the regional organizations and countries concerned and must strengthen cooperation with them in carrying out peacekeeping operations.

To sum up, coordination among the Security Council, troop-contributing countries, the Secretariat's Department of Peacekeeping Operations, relevant field missions and the regional organizations and countries concerned should be further strengthened. There should be an established regime and mechanism for such coordination, and it should become a regular practice of the Security Council. It takes joint efforts by all Member States to strengthen the peacekeeping capacity

of the United Nations. The report (A/55/305) of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi has provided Member States with a good basis for discussion. It is our hope that those recommendations in the report that enjoy broad agreement and that are easy to carry out can be implemented as soon as possible.

In the past year, the Security Council has held quite a number of discussions on hot-spot issues in Africa. It remains a major challenge, however, for the Council to find timely, effective and durable solutions to those issues. We hope that the declaration (Security Council resolution 1318 (2000), annex) adopted at the Security Council summit meeting last September, especially those parts that relate to Africa, will be implemented in an earnest and effective way.

Last year, when adopting its resolutions on the arms embargo against Ethiopia and Eritrea and on the diamond embargo against Sierra Leone, the Security Council for the first time explicitly set time-frames for the embargoes. By doing so, the Council achieved a major breakthrough in its sanctions work, because it rightly responded to the call of a vast number of Member States.

We have always supported the Security Council's efforts to improve its working methods, transparency and efficiency so that it can better carry out its responsibilities with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security on behalf of all Member States. The Chinese delegation is ready to continue, along with other delegations, to work constructively to that end.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I take this opportunity to thank Member States for the support they showed by electing Colombia as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the period 2001-2002. Colombia assumes that challenge with a great sense of responsibility, and will maintain positions that conform strictly to the United Nations Charter and its fundamental principles.

After looking through the report before us on the work of the Security Council (A/55/2), I should like to focus on three issues. The first is the methodology of the report. We recognize and applaud the improvements made in the content of the report and in the methodology used to prepare it. However, as we have already said on other occasions, a major problem remains: The inadequacy of information for States that are not members of the Security Council, owing to the high number of informal meetings. In the period under review, according to the report, there were 144 formal meetings. But 194 informal consultations also took place, of which non-members know nothing except for what each country is able to find out for itself. That is a clear example of how ill-informed are States not part of the Security Council.

Colombia understands that certain meetings must be held in private owing to the sensitivity of the issues under discussion, but there are occasions on which we believe that there is room for openness, for the sake of transparency in the decisions taken. Problems of international peace and security are of equal concern to members and to non-members of the Council. For that reason, we stress the need to reform current practice, or at least to consider alternative ways to incorporate the opinions and viewpoints of non-member States that can contribute innovative ideas. Open debates have been an important step forward, but it is necessary to explore other mechanisms to increase the transparency of the Security Council's methods and procedures.

Secondly, as concerns the mandate of the Security Council, we believe that we need to evaluate the Council's competence. According to Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, the Security Council has

> "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security".

There are "new" thematic items on the agenda that are not clearly linked to the maintenance of peace and security and that are usually discussed at least once a month in the Council. These issues have their own discussion forums, and therefore, when they are considered by the Security Council as they are now, they have an impact on the actions taken by other United Nations bodies. These are very important issues on the world's agenda and directly affect a great number of countries, and we therefore deem it inappropriate that they be excluded from wider consideration, unless this procedure genuinely benefits the Council's work.

Thirdly, in the past year there has been growing general dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of the peace operations set up by the Security Council. A lack of clarity in the mandates of some missions is not only damaging the Organization's credibility but also leading to the loss of human lives. This must change. We cannot continue to excuse the Organization for

flaws that are repeated daily. The Security Council has the responsibility of reviewing this practice. We cannot keep sending Blue Helmets to areas of conflict as a sign of hope for civil society, when the truth is that perhaps they do not represent the best way to achieve peace.

If a mission's mandate is not stated clearly, with enough human, economic and logistical resources to ensure its success, it is better not to create such a mission. We cannot repeat the same mistakes such as the well-documented ones in Rwanda, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sierra Leone, to mention just a few. All of this is made even worse when we take into account the existing serious shortcomings in preventive actions.

For this reason, we believe that the Organization is facing a very important challenge today. The report submitted by the high-level Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, contained in document A/55/305, makes a series of recommendations for improving these operations. In order to adopt and adapt these recommendations, the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretariat must work together. It would be pointless for each organ to present individual conclusions, as this would only further postpone the necessary reform of peacekeeping operations.

There are some who argue that this issue falls more within the purview of the Council than that of the General Assembly. It is clear that a great number of decisions concerning peace operations do fall within the purview of the Council. However, we must keep in mind that these decisions affect a great number of people and that there is therefore a need for open debate leading to a broadly representative consensus, in order not to further delay the reform we so desire.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize how important Security Council reform is for Colombia. The issues we have raised today make clear the need to transform the Security Council into a more representative body whose practices are transparent enough to secure the greatest possible trust and whose members can contribute in a more balanced way to its decisions.

Mr. Vento (Italy): I would like at the outset to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Namibia, Ambassador Andjaba, this month's Security Council President, on his clear and detailed presentation of the Council's annual report to the General Assembly. I also commend the Secretariat for its excellent preparatory work.

The report is a document that is invaluable to the necessary interaction between the Council and the General Assembly, pursuant to the recommendations of Article 15 of the Charter. As always, however, there is room for improvement. That is why I reiterate the wish my delegation has expressed in previous years that the report, rather than being a mere catalogue of meetings, resolutions and presidential statements, should be more substantial and analytical, which would allow us to better assess the work of the Security Council in all its aspects and effects, in the areas of both peace and resources. That is why I am in agreement with many of the remarks that have been made by the representative of India.

This annual occasion provides the entire membership of the General Assembly with an opportunity for collective reflection. I would like to take this opportunity to share my thoughts on the work of the Security Council in the fundamental area of peace and security.

There has been a sharp and healthy increase in the Security Council's activities in the past 12 months. The Council has had to address some of the most sensitive and difficult crises in the world, authorizing five new peacekeeping missions of great complexity and importance, namely in Kosovo, East Timor, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Ethiopia and Eritrea. At the same time, it has reinforced the operation in southern Lebanon. Italy is actively involved in five of those six missions. Considering the marked rise in interventions decided on by the Council and the enormous consequences of this renewed activism for all Members of the Organization, we all have a right to question the way these mandates were adopted and to ask whether different and more effective means might have been used to achieve peace.

These same questions fuelled the report by the group of experts led by the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, which the competent bodies — the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretariat — must now assess for action. Another question we must ask is whether authentic and timely conflict prevention efforts have been made by the Security Council,

drawing on the full means indicated under Chapter VI of the Charter.

In the past year the United Nations has taken on growing responsibility for the maintenance of international peace, following an era in which the threat of intersecting vetoes had paralysed its ability to act. This became possible thanks not only to a growing convergence of views among the members of the Security Council, particularly the five permanent members, but also, and above all, to the common commitment and the joint contributions of the members of the General Assembly, because in many cases important players in crisis management and conflict resolution are members of the General Assembly but not necessarily of the Security Council.

The maintenance of international peace and security is, in fact, a collective responsibility to be shouldered by the international community as a whole. Some countries, because of their influence, strategic and geographic position as "front-line countries", offer contributions decisive to the political and stabilization processes at the heart of peace agreements, the prerequisite for any United Nations intervention. Other countries, whose numbers are growing, have deployed their contingents of troops and police forces on missions deliberated by the Security Council. The new "complex" missions in Kosovo and East Timor, which involve a form of international administration of the territories, require magistrates, judges, prison and border guards and civil administrators from countries that belong to different geographic groups.

Italy participates actively in this renewed commitment, both through its specialized personnel involved directly in United Nations missions and through the action conducted by the European Union in close connection with the United Nations. This is why the Secretary-General's recent talks in Strasbourg and Brussels, aimed at strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union in the crucial area of conflict prevention and crisis management, should be strongly supported. This process was already implicit when the European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, made a statement on the Balkan crisis at the Security Council meeting last June — an important first step towards enhanced collaboration between the United Nations and the European Union.

The need for the rapid development of peacekeeping operations decided on by the Security Council, and their substantial evolution in recent years, has made the United Nations financial crisis even more glaring. The exponential increase in the peacekeeping budget has placed a growing burden on all United Nations Members, especially the top contributors. In the current budget year, for example, Italy is paying approximately $110 million to finance peacekeeping operations that the Security Council decided on in complete autonomy. We are thus in favour of a review of the scale of assessments for peacekeeping that will endow this fundamental sector with greater stability and resources and also compensate for the persistent state of financial uncertainty.

The tragic experiences of Sierra Leone, and, earlier, of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda, have forced us to engage in a profound reflection on the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations decided on by the Security Council. In his report to the Millennium Assembly, the Secretary-General bravely faced up to the grave failures of United Nations missions, some of them recent, and underlined the need to increase the efficiency and legitimacy of the Council.

First of all, the Security Council must do more in the way of conflict prevention and adopt credible mandates, after having listened to all the interested countries, organizations and parties that can contribute to the resolution of crisis situations. In the future, we will be counting on an improvement in the Council's decision-making procedures, and a full accounting of them in the annual report we are discussing today.

There is a widespread feeling that non-members of the Council should also be consulted in its decision-making process. Our Organization's future success in restoring peace to some of the most tormented parts of the world will depend, to an increasing extent, on the ability of Council members to open up to outside contributions. The recommendations in the Brahimi report are particularly useful in this regard: we need to work so that active interaction with countries that contribute to peace operations takes place during the consideration of a new mandate and in cases where mandates have to be modified in response to events on the ground.

We need to reform the Council's working methods. Last year, there was an encouraging increase in open debates and public meetings.

I should like to say one other thing about the reform of the Security Council. The final Declaration of the Millennium Summit properly recommended comprehensive reform in all aspects, thus rejecting quick fixes or short-cuts on key issues such as the veto, the equality of Member States and effectiveness. That is why we do not see how an increase in the permanent membership would improve the decision-making process of the Security Council — quite the contrary, since the Security Council usually works at the level of the lowest common denominator among the permanent five members as a result of the power of the veto or the simple threat of the veto. That is the rule the Security Council follows. We are therefore puzzled by the criticism of the way in which the Working Group on reform works. There is minority rule and majority rule, but I think the need to reform the Security Council is too serious an issue for us to allow it to be dealt with in a way that promotes the interests of certain countries instead of the membership in general.

The credibility of our Organization in the maintenance of peace depends on its ability to adjust to new challenges and circumstances. While every Member State must strive to strengthen the crisis-management capacities of the United Nations in the field of peacekeeping and to reform its financial arrangements, the Security Council has special responsibilities. The most important of these responsibilities regards decision-making. This is a commitment that, pursuant to Article 24 of the Charter, is conferred upon the members of the Security Council by the general membership, which, in return, expects thorough, effective implementation.

Mr. Ka (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I should like first of all to convey my delegation's congratulations to my brother and friend, Ambassador Martin Andjaba of Namibia. As President of the Security Council for October, he introduced with his usual clarity and precision the annual report of the Security Council covering the period 16 June 1999 to 15 June 2000.

It is true that the report is long, but it is full of facts and figures and provides a complete picture of the important role of the Security Council in managing the many situations that pose a threat to international peace and security in the world.

Member States have a legitimate interest in the activities of the Council and in the General Assembly debate on the report of the Council, as provided for in Article 15 and Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter.

This debate certainly provides a special opportunity to review the work of the Council and to consider ways of maintaining or enhancing the credibility and effectiveness of that central body in order to create the necessary synergy between it and the other principal organs of the Organization. We believe that this discussion of the report is useful for both the Security Council and the General Assembly because it helps to ensure perfect coordination and effective interaction.

It is clear from reading the report that once again the Council has had a particularly busy year. During the reporting period, it held 144 formal meetings, adopted 57 resolutions, issued 38 presidential statements and held 194 informal consultations of the whole.

I wish to pay a well-deserved tribute to all Council members for the high quality and relevance of the report, which offers us a timely assessment of their level of commitment to international peace and security.

The report is also the outcome of the efforts made by Council members and the Secretariat to fulfil the desire of countries members and non-members of the Council to make the work of that strategic body more transparent.

The need for greater transparency in the work of the Security Council has met with great progress in recent years, and we appreciate the now well-established practice of briefing non-members of the Council. I also wish to stress and welcome the more frequent use of open debates on items on the Council's agenda, as well as the positive initiatives taken by the Presidents to organize open meetings on specific questions of concern to the entire international community.

During this year, the Council has held thematic debates on peacekeeping, on security and post-conflict peace-building, on the promotion of peace and security, on humanitarian aid to refugees in Africa, on children affected by armed conflict, on the protection of civilians affected by armed conflicts, on small arms and light weapons, on the responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of peace, on the role of the Council in the prevention of armed conflicts, on the

humanitarian aspects of items before the Security Council, and, finally, on an equally important issue, the question of sanctions.

Clearly, these stimulating debates are of special importance for the non-members of the Council, because it means that they can make an important contribution to the consideration of the items on the Council's agenda. This is why my delegation supports this innovation, even as we remain convinced of the need to improve its practical effectiveness by holding more frequent open meetings on specific items, leading to concrete action.

Again this year, as in previous years, the report of the Security Council gives special attention to crises in Africa, the continent which currently has the greatest number of conflicts on the Council's agenda. I refer to Angola, Burundi, Ethiopia/Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, and so forth. Given the unstable political situation in the continent, which is a source of concern for the entire international community, the Council has made commendable efforts to contain these conflicts. It can never be repeated too often that unless there is peace and stability, there can be no sustainable economic development in Africa.

In this regard, I wish to welcome the many initiatives on Africa undertaken by the Council during the reporting period and beyond. I wish to refer to the memorable days of 24 and 26 January 2000, and during which the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was considered, and during which, under the aegis of the United States presidency, the Security Council had a high-level debate in the presence of Presidents Chiluba of Zambia, Chissano of Mozambique, Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, dos Santos of Angola, Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Museveni of Uganda and Bizimungu of Rwanda, as well as the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and Sir Ketumile Masire, the facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue.

The taking of timely, courageous decisions validated the work of that meeting, in particular the reaffirmation of the commitments of the main protagonists of the Congolese crisis to work together for the strict implementation of the provisions of the Lusaka Agreement and for the immediate deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The international community as a whole welcomed that United States initiative and hoped that it would lead to new dynamism and thus a political solution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

It is in this same context that we also welcomed the dispatch of the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region to build on the outcome of the January meeting. It is true that that field mission did not bring about a major breakthrough in the Congolese crisis; however, it did help to enhance the Council's credibility by opening the way for the process of demilitarizing the city of Kisangani and making it safer. At that time, Kisangani was a hotbed of acts of violence that caused hundreds of civilian casualties.

Closer to us geographically, even if this event is not technically covered by the report, I wish to point out that the recent mission of a delegation of the Security Council to the subregion of West Africa is another illustration of this determination on the part of Council members to undertake specific actions in the field to restore peace and security in areas torn by conflict and civil war.

Finally, among the most outstanding activities of the Council during this year was the meeting held in parallel with the Millennium Summit where heads of State of countries members of the Council discussed primarily problems of security and peace in Africa.

In the interest of peace and development in the African continent, the Security Council should start considering ways to give Africans the capacity to strengthen their own capacity for peacekeeping, and particularly their capacity for prevention in order to deal with crisis situations. I have used the word "capacity" repeatedly because I wish to stress this need. All too often, the Council has been accused, rightly or wrongly, of reacting to African problems and of being slow to take proper preventive action. My delegation believes that a rapid reaction mechanism should be designed and put into place jointly by the Council and the regional organizations, on the basis of a partnership that would strike a balance between their respective roles and responsibilities.

African leaders, the Organization of African Unity and the subregional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community and the Economic Community of Central African States, have decided to include in their field of action the

prevention and security mechanisms to deal with the many African conflicts.

Another aspect of the work of the Council to be considered is the need to improve the working methods of that central body. In this regard, I am pleased to note that there is already broad consensus on such essential points as the participation of non-members in Council meetings, the programme of work of the Council and the briefings convened by the President of the Council for the benefit of non-members and troop-contributing countries. It now remains to go further and to institutionalize these trends so that from now on the promotion of international peace and security is based on a revitalized, more effective and more transparent Security Council.

We must finally end a deplorable trend that prevents the Council from fulfilling its mandate — that of Member States and regional organizations taking coercive action without the Council's authorization or acting unilaterally, invoking the right to humanitarian intervention. This trend should be discouraged by asserting the Council's competence in the areas defined by the Charter, so that the Security Council is in step with the changing world and so that it can demonstrate imagination and determination in the maintenance of global peace, security and stability.

Precisely since it functions solely in the service of peace, the Council — to enhance the authority and credibility with which it carries out its essential and fundamental mission of preserving global peace and security — needs the unequivocal support of its members and of the other members of the international community. In this regard, the valuable contribution that the Brahimi report could make to the Council's exercise of its mandate should be stressed. It seems to me that, were they to be adopted, some of the relevant recommendations contained in that report could considerably improve the work of the Council — for example, in the future management of peacekeeping operations.

In conclusion, I would like to extend heartfelt congratulations to the representatives of Mauritius, Ireland, Norway, Colombia and Singapore, which have just been elected to the Security Council.

Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Ambassador Martin Andjaba of Namibia for introducing the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. We also thank the other members of the Security Council and the Secretariat for the work they did to prepare this large amount of material.

Without failing to recognize its value as part of the institutional memory of the Council, we reiterate that this kind of information is far from what we hope to receive and what we need. The annual report is not a privilege granted to the Member States represented in this Assembly; it is an obligation clearly established in Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter. We have the legitimate right to expect a proper accounting from the body to which we have entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and which, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, acts on behalf of all the Member States.

In 1996 the General Assembly adopted resolution 51/193, with the precise objective of ensuring that the reports of the Security Council to the Assembly would provide a timely, substantive and analytic account of its work. However, most of the proposals contained in this resolution continue to be ignored. The Assembly should therefore undertake a consideration of the reasons for this non-compliance and take action to remedy the situation.

The General Assembly still does not receive the special reports that should be submitted by the Council, in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter. The presentation of such reports would in no way prejudice the work of the Council. On the contrary, it would be beneficial for all. It would enable the Assembly to make useful recommendations on the work of the Council and make possible active and continuous relations between the two bodies — something that is lacking at present.

Greater transparency in the work of the Council is urgently needed. In an increasingly interdependent world, decisions taken by that body have a growing effect, directly or indirectly, on all Member States. In addition, when those decisions are implemented, the financing comes from all the Member States and not solely from those States taking the decisions.

In the specific case of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, we must express appreciation for the constant efforts made by Argentina and Jamaica to keep the countries of the region as informed as possible on the work of the Council. But such efforts alone are not sufficient.

According to its own rules of procedure, the Council must meet in public unless it is decided otherwise. However, the rule has become the exception. The Council continues to carry out most of its work behind closed doors, despite the fact that the majority of Member States have emphatically and repeatedly stated that this is unacceptable. The Council's provisional rules of procedure are not even applied during these closed meetings.

We welcome the fact that, although such meetings remain the exception, over the past year there has been an increase in the number of open meetings of the Security Council. This trend should be maintained, but the objective is not merely to have an increase in quantity; open meetings should provide non-Member States a real opportunity to make an effective contribution to the work of that body. Too often we witness lengthy open debates in the Security Council that ultimately have no effect on the resolutions or presidential statements adopted, since the texts have been agreed on previously in closed meetings among the Council members.

So long as the current practice remains in place, the annual report of the Council must include detailed information on the discussions held behind closed doors. At present we are told only how long the meetings lasted. In general the monthly reports of the Council President offer little or no analysis. The presentation of these reports must become the rule, and we must establish parameters for the minimum information that must be contained in them.

We are concerned by the trend in the Security Council to discuss issues and adopt texts ruling on questions of a general nature — activities that far exceed the responsibilities entrusted to that body by the Charter. This approach is being used with increasing frequency by the Council in order to legitimize its actions in the economic, social and humanitarian spheres.

The Council must not assume tasks entrusted to the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies. Instead, its efforts should be focused on achieving greater coordination and cooperation between it and the Assembly and other bodies, as established by the Charter. As to the increasingly complex mandates adopted by the Council, there can be no excuse for its failure to adhere strictly to the principles of respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

We welcome the inclusion in the Council's report, for the second consecutive year, of the reports of the sanctions Committees. At the same time, we reiterate that these Committees' working methods are affected by the same distortions evidenced in the Security Council's meetings and need to be reviewed. The meetings of sanctions Committees must, as a rule, be open and when they are held behind closed doors on an exceptional basis, detailed information on the deliberations must be provided in the Council's reports. The countries affected must have the full right to participate in the discussions of the sanctions Committees.

Sanctions regimes cannot become punitive instruments against some countries based on the hegemonic interests of certain Council members, as, unfortunately, now occurs in well-known cases. It is paradoxical that the very countries that are determined to preserve sanctions regimes which reflect their own national interests and affect innocent civilians are also among those that try to convince us of the value of so-called humanitarian intervention. This is a clear example of hypocrisy and double standards.

While the Council's annual report reflects the fact that most of the items on its agenda involve Africa, attention and available resources also remain focused on that continent. The undeniable truth is that Africa has more armed conflicts today than any other continent. More than one third of African countries are presently or have recently been involved in conflicts. It is clear that, beyond rhetoric, we need practical action and the necessary political will to find solutions to the growing and pressing problems of an entire continent, which are due primarily to their colonial past and to the current poverty, marginalization and underdevelopment in which African nations are mired.

We are convinced that many of the problems that we have addressed will be satisfactorily resolved only if there is complete reform of the Security Council, which is undoubtedly the most delicate and urgent task of United Nations reform as a whole. It should not, however, be cited as an excuse for maintaining the status quo while such reforms are being developed. As clear proof of the genuine will to move forward, we hope that the comments and suggestions that have been made and will continue to be made in this debate will

be taken duly into account by the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil): I thank Ambassador Martin Andjaba for his presentation of the Security Council report for the period June 1999 to June 2000. I take this opportunity also to congratulate the newly elected members of the Council: Colombia, Singapore, Ireland, Norway and Mauritius.

This annual debate should serve the purpose of discussing how decisions of the Council could be taken with broader communication with Member States. We support initiatives aimed at enhancing accountability and transparency in the work of the Security Council. Indeed, the work of the Security Council must be brought closer to the general membership. In this respect, we commend the holding of daily briefings by the presidency for their quality and level of detail. The increasing practice of open briefings, open debates and more frequent private meetings is also an encouraging sign. The sanctions Committee's reports could be debated in open meetings. We encourage outgoing Presidents to brief Member States on the work of the Security Council during their term and to circulate their assessments. Resolutions and presidential statements should be preceded by broader discussions and better reflect the general sense of open debates.

The report of the Security Council summarizes a year of intense activities, some success stories and, unfortunately, many reasons for concern. Africa remains the main focus of Council actions and discussions. The recurring violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the difficulties in implementing the peace process in Sierra Leone, the continuation of the civil war in Angola and the territorial dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea are powerful reminders that the United Nations still has a long way to go before our goal of a more stable international scenario can be achieved.

We are encouraged by the positive prospects in Angola, since the Government's forces are well able to contain the military challenge posed by UNITA in defiance of the Lusaka Protocol. We also welcome the fact that, since the United Nations Office in Angola became operational, there has been a noticeable improvement in the flow of humanitarian assistance.

The Middle East, especially after the events of recent weeks, is a source of grave concern. We welcome the adoption of resolution 1322 (2000) and stress the need for the Council to respond to possible outbreaks of violence in the region. Brazil also reaffirms that resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) must be the bases of a just and lasting solution to the Arab and Israeli conflict.

Also concerning the Middle East, the Council, although far from showing unity, was able to adopt a resolution on Iraq in the period covered by the report.

We hope to see peace and stability taking root in the Balkans. Despite recent positive developments in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Security Council's attention to the region is no less crucial than it was before. We reaffirm our support for the work of the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo and our call for the local population to develop a culture of tolerance and multiculturalism. We note, however, that the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) was also a highly divisive issue for the Council.

The situation in East Timor is of close interest to Brazil. The leadership of the Secretary-General and the determined action of the Council during all stages of the crisis were essential to assert the message that the Timorese people's democratic option for self-determination could not be reversed by force. East Timor has to complete several transitions: from oppression to self-determination and independence; from economic backwardness to sustainable development; and from fear and terror to stability and tranquillity. The complex task of administering East Timor's transition to independence is being conducted with great competence by Under-Secretary-General Sergio Vieira de Mello and his team. Acts of violence and infiltration by militia groups in East Timor should not be allowed to disrupt the construction of the new State.

Peacekeeping operations are increasingly complex and numerous. The Security Council must be attentive to the current efforts to reflect on how to respond to new peacekeeping mandates. The Brahimi report offers a valuable framework on how to build upon lessons learned from mistakes of the past. The courageous reports on Rwanda and Srebrenica should be standing references. The challenge is, as the Brahimi report itself points out, the establishment of mandates that are clear, credible and achievable. Financial resources, mandate and political will must converge to make every United Nations peacekeeping initiative feasible.

Sanctions must be a tool for the normalization of international relations, not a collective punishment imposed on the population of a targeted country. Sanctions are an extreme measure that is justifiable only when alternatives for a peaceful settlement of the dispute have failed altogether. They should be proportional to the objectives and limited to precise targets, bear in mind the humanitarian impact and the effect on third parties, and contain clear terms of duration and termination. We praise the efforts of Ambassador Fowler in strengthening the implementation of the sanctions regime against UNITA. We are also looking forward to the results of the Security Council's working group on how to improve the effectiveness of United Nations sanctions established in April.

At the Millennium Summit, our leaders set the priorities for the agenda of the United Nations and the Security Council. Tolerance, democracy, development, human rights and humanitarian principles are at the core of what is to be achieved by the international community. The foundation of international law, upon which our quest for the Millennium Summit goals should be based, lies in the United Nations Charter. We reaffirm our view that the Security Council is the only body whose legitimacy to impose enforcement measures is based on a universally accepted instrument. The alternative to legitimacy provided by the United Nations Charter is an unstable order in which the goals established at the Millennium Summit will be more distant.

The leaders of the world called for intensified efforts to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council to make it more representative, effective and legitimate. The Council's present composition reflects events that occurred 55 years ago. The decision-making process in the Council must reflect the collective will of the international community as a whole. Otherwise, the Council will have a very modest role — if any at all — in our search for a durable solution to international crises.

Mr. Valdez Carrillo (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Peruvian delegation wishes to thank Ambassador Martin Andjaba, Permanent Representative of Namibia and current President of the Security Council, for submitting the annual report of that body (A/55/2), covering the period from 16 June 1999 to 15 June 2000. We have received this report in accordance with Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, and we welcome the dialogue that can be established, through this debate, between two of the most important bodies of the system.

The maintenance of peace and security is one of the basic purposes of the Organization, reflected in Article 1 of the Charter, and it is also an ongoing desire and concern of nations. The Security Council is the body responsible for this duty, acting on behalf of the Members of the Organization. Members have a legitimate interest in the follow-up of achievements and progress, as well as problems and setbacks. That interest must be acknowledged and reciprocated.

Peru welcomes the efforts for openness made over the past year through the holding of more open meetings of the Council on various topics of interest, and hopes that this attitude will continue to prevail in the future so that the Security Council will become more transparent in its work and will consider the points of view of the majority of the States of this Organization.

Peru also welcomes the first steps to establish an ongoing, direct dialogue between the Security Council members and troop-contributing countries on the basic aspects of peacekeeping operations, such as the mandate, financial base and human resources of every mission. My delegation also considers that every member elected to that organ must make an ongoing effort to disseminate and update information to its respective region, as the delegation of Argentina does through weekly meetings at its Mission and the delegation of Jamaica does at the meetings of the Latin American and Caribbean Group.

Recent years, and specifically the period corresponding to this report, have posed enormous challenges in terms of planning and implementation by the Organization because of the size and importance of deployed peacekeeping operations. These new realities have arisen from internal conflicts whose destabilizing force involves or spreads to neighbouring countries, necessarily leading to an adjustment of traditional peacekeeping operation duties. This situation has produced the emergence of new concepts and the expansion of traditional functions in mandates, stemming from deliberations and decisions that leave the great majority of the States of the Organization outside the debate on the best way to face these new realities.

Moreover, we have recently witnessed discussions within the Security Council on aspects that fall within the jurisdiction of other forums of the Organization, such as the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. It has thus become more common to restrict to a small group of countries the debate on concepts that, without an appropriate framework, can lead to intervention and interference in the internal affairs of States. For example, there is no clear basis of action and interpretation for so-called humanitarian intervention, which would justify the use of force due to serious violations of humanitarian law and human rights. Questions arise about who will determine when these violations occur, and by what standards and why this discussion does not take place within a more participatory forum.

We cannot ignore that the mandate conferred by the Charter on the Security Council responded to a reality in which relations between States prevailed in the international arena. Therefore, the Charter alludes to those relations when it deals with measures to prevent threats to peace and security.

Peru has also carefully followed the debates in the Security Council on the prevention of armed conflict. Positions have been expressed in these meetings promoting a broad, unilateral expansion of the concept of the causes of conflicts and of the very concept of security, incorporating factors of a political nature and of government management.

Peru favours preventive action that deals with the main causes of conflicts, particularly well-known economic factors such as poverty and underdevelopment. However, it believes that this subject must be framed within the principles and norms of the Charter of the Organization and must result from ongoing dialogue with the competent bodies of the system, such as the Economic and Social Council.

That body has a basic role to play in efforts to prevent conflicts. It understands that items on poverty and development are of high priority within the framework of the United Nations — the "promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples", as is mentioned in the Charter. These priorities have been postponed despite having the majority support of Member countries and being in keeping with the preventive effort promoted by the Security Council.

We also believe that it could be difficult for the Security Council, in fulfilling the responsibilities assigned to it under the Charter, to achieve the desired results unless there is also a process allowing for the strengthening of the General Assembly.

Peru is convinced that it is essential to strengthen the role and effectiveness of the General Assembly, the most representative and democratic body of the international system, in order for it to regain a decisive role in managing and deciding on those matters over which it has legitimate and direct jurisdiction. These include issues related to international peace and security, as stipulated in Article 11 of the Charter. This function must be performed in order to determine the frameworks of collective security, which, as I have mentioned, is faced with situations of internal conflict, for which the Security Council was not designed, especially in those cases in which consequences and decisions of universal application may arise.

We believe that the General Assembly is not only capable of consideration, reflection and recommendations in these matters, but that the need for the fulfilment of this role is more evident than ever before. There is no better place than this to negotiate, express and agree consensually on new concepts that will be applied later by the Security Council.

This forum also contributes to the safeguarding of the basic principles of relations between States and the establishment of a common basis for action that derives from the participation of all States. We reaffirm that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations is the relevant forum within the Organization to deal with all matters relating to such operations.

Peru received with interest the statement of the Security Council during the Millennium Summit. We believe that most aspects dealt with therein form a basis for a general consensus among States. We emphasize, among other things, the reaffirmation of the purposes and principles of the Charter, the search for greater effectiveness in peacekeeping operations, the strengthening of the security of the Organization's personnel in the field, the expansion of consultations with the troop-contributing countries and the importance of reintegrating former combatants into society.

These same aspects have been particularly emphasized in the report of the Panel of experts, presided over by the former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, which has led to an intense debate in various forums of the

Organization and on which Peru will submit its opinion in the relevant bodies.

However, we believe that the Security Council statement lacked specific reference to studying sanctions regimes, as was mentioned by some Security Council delegations during its debate. The purpose of such reviews will be to ensure that sanctions do not have their greatest impact — in some cases, permanently — on a civilian population that ends up being the direct victim of the sanctions imposed on a particular Government.

On the other hand, Peru is pleased with efforts to analyse the economic causes of conflicts, in connection with the role played by rebel groups and third States in their illegal exploitation of natural resources. We believe that this is a very important factor in sustaining current conflicts, and it must be addressed. For its part, the Peruvian delegation has informed the appropriate national authorities of the specific provisions of the Security Council pertaining to this situation.

My delegation has followed, and will continue to follow attentively, all these matters regarding the Security Council. We are convinced of the fundamental role assigned to the Council by the Charter of the Organization. That is why we would like for it to achieve its full potential, for we acknowledge that the success of its efforts means the success of the Organization and, consequently, the achievement of the desire for peace and security of all our peoples.

Mr. Buallay (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank our colleague Ambassador Andjaba, the Permanent Representative of Namibia and President of the Security Council for the month of October, for his presentation of the report of the Security Council for the period June 1999 to June 2000. It is also my pleasure to congratulate Singapore, Mauritius, Colombia, Norway and Ireland on their election to the Council for 2001 and 2002.

Our delegation has examined the document containing the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. We pay tribute to the effort that has gone into preparing the report, and we would like to reaffirm the importance of the role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. Bahrain spared no effort to play an effective role during its membership in the Security Council, from January 1998 to December 1999 — a period that witnessed many raging conflicts, from Africa to Europe to Asia. My country was able to witness at first-hand the importance of the role entrusted to the Security Council in ensuring stability in the world. However, we were likewise able to see at first-hand that there were many obstacles standing in the way of the Council's achieving its purpose that is organically linked to the maintenance of international peace and security. It may be appropriate here to touch upon some of those obstacles.

First, given the political map of the international community, there is the question of the inequitable representation in the membership of the Security Council. It goes without saying that this map is different today from what it was at the time the Charter was established, in 1945. This is true whether one looks at numbers, geographical distribution or the balance of political power. Some say that increasing the number of members in the Council in the interest of equity might affect the efficiency of the Council's work. While that might be true to a certain extent, it is not sufficient reason to justify having 15 members of the Council represent 189 Member States of the United Nations.

Secondly, there is the issue of the lack of transparency in the work of the Council, in particular where the concept of collective security is concerned. That concept presupposes the participation of the largest possible number of members of the international community, including members of the Council itself. It is true that there has been greater access in recent years by other members of the United Nations to the work of the Council. But there has not been enough openness to enable non-member States of the Council to participate effectively. This applies especially to members of the Organization whose countries are facing the same problems as those being discussed by the Council.

Thirdly, there is a difference in the ways that the permanent and non-permanent members of the Council deal with various issues. We are not here to discuss the issue of veto power; but perhaps the right of veto and the fact that one group has permanent membership status and the other does not, serve to engender within the Council two different views and two methods of work on the same issue.

Fourthly, there is the issue of the crisis faced by peacekeeping operations — which are entrusted to the Council — whether with regard to logistical, financial

or organizational aspects of those operations. Despite the fact that each peacekeeping operation has its own particularities, there is apparently no clear organizational methodology or planning in place for those operations. As a result, decisions on resolutions to deploy United Nations peacekeepers stem from considerations reflecting the views and analyses of certain members of the Council, in particular those of the most influential members.

Fifthly, the sanctions regimes established by the Charter of the Organization, whose imposition and implementation have been entrusted to the Council, have negative consequences when they are imposed for a long period of time and turn the acute suffering of peoples into chronic suffering. There is a need for a standardized system that would mitigate negative effects on populations as months and years go by. Moreover, we believe that the imposition of sanctions should not be comprehensive; rather, sanctions should be confined to specific areas. To give one example, sanctions should not prevent people from fulfilling religious obligations that may require travel outside their countries, simply because the sanctions prohibit travel outside the country under sanctions. This matter requires radical review, in accordance with the guidelines established by the non-permanent members of the Council in 1999, which can serve as a basis for such a review.

I would like to say a few final words about the Middle East situation and where that question stands in the Council. The Middle East problem is closely linked to international peace and security and has resulted in more than one war. Although the problem has been on the international scene since 1948, it is not on the agenda of the Council. The recent tragic events in the region, which have led to over 100 Palestinian deaths as a result of an Israeli act of provocation, should make us realize the importance of this question. It is high time for the Security Council once again to take up this issue that was the subject of much discussion by the Council in the past and led to the adoption of a number of resolutions. Of particular importance are resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), whose implementation has been pending for quite some time.

Mr. Nguyen Thanh Chau (Viet Nam): The delegation of Viet Nam wishes to thank His Excellency Ambassador Martin Andjaba, Permanent Representative of Namibia and President of the Security Council for the month of October, for his succinct and informative presentation of the report of the Security Council (A/55/2). His statement surely helped us to understand more fully the contents of the comprehensive report, which is rich in factual material, as well as the work of the Council during the period under review. I wish to congratulate the Security Council secretariat on the hard work that went into the production of the report.

The Millennium Summit showed that the general membership of the United Nations has the intense aspiration to enhance the authority of the General Assembly, the organ in which every Member is represented. The Millennium Declaration also underlined the importance of the task of further strengthening the relationship between this body and the Security Council. In that context, the Assembly's consideration of the report of the Security Council today is of special significance. We hope that what we do today will contribute to improving the work of the Council and will thus make a worthy contribution to the maintenance of world peace and security in the coming years.

We have carefully studied the report and wish to underline the positive developments in the work of the Council in the period from 16 June 1999 to 15 June 2000. It is quite noticeable that there has been greater transparency in the meetings conducted by the Council during that period. The general membership has long been very energetic in calling for greater transparency in the conduct of the business of that body. We have seen a greater number of public meetings and prompt briefings by Presidents of the Council to representatives of States not members of the Council. It is noteworthy that in recent years, non-members of the Security Council have been increasingly engaged in the discussions of important issues before the Council. There is no doubt that such participation is essential for the success of the Council's activities. It is a welcome development.

We welcome the prompt actions of the Security Council during the period in resolving crises in many regions throughout the world. In that regard, we wish the Security Council would apply the same approach to the current Middle East crisis. We earnestly hope that a solution will be found to the crisis and that the peace process will be put back on track.

We also welcome the fact that the parties concerned in given issues have been invited to take

part in some of the consultations of the Council. Their participation has helped the Council to produce more balanced and impartial solutions to the issues under discussion. They have brought greater, valuable inputs into the work of the Council.

Reading the report and following the work of the Council, we recognize that the Council has made great efforts to conduct a larger number of public meetings consisting of thematic debates. These debates have focused on many issues that relate to the maintenance of world peace and security, such as the protection of civilians in armed conflict; protection for humanitarian assistance to refugees; children and armed conflict; and others. This initiative has received an earnest response from States not members of the Council. We hope that this procedure will continue, because it is our conviction that it will help the Council to better equip itself to deal with crises when they occur in the future.

In that regard, we wish to caution members that the question of so-called humanitarian intervention raises many delicate and controversial questions. These include a fundamental principle of the United Nations Charter, namely State sovereignty. We hold that the Security Council should not attempt to expand its purview beyond what is authorized under the Charter, because that would in time diminish the roles of other competent organs of the United Nations; here, the General Assembly is a case in point. The general membership of the United Nations, for instance, will not accept the Council indulging in efforts to establish certain norms.

We wish to take this opportunity to stress that the Security Council should do its utmost to avoid private meetings. It is our view that private meetings should be the exception rather than the norm, as they are now. The world community today cannot accept the practice by which the Council holds formal meetings only to conduct thematic debates or to inform the general membership of the work it has done in secret.

As regards the decision-making mechanism of the Council, my delegation is particularly concerned at the fact that, although the veto power was not used during period under review, some Council members still resort to the threat of using it, thus making the work of the Council less effective. Because of this practice, many meetings and consultations of the Council are prolonged into the wee hours, and awaited solutions have not been forthcoming. The Council's impasse in reviewing ongoing sanctions regimes is a good case in point.

My delegation calls on the Council urgently to review the sanctions regimes that are under the authority of the Council. Viet Nam believes that sanctions should be the last resort, that their scope and duration should be clearly defined and that great caution should be exercised before they are imposed. Most important of all, they should never be used indefinitely. In this connection, we call on Council members to urgently review and lift all the sanctions imposed upon Iraq, taking into account their debilitating effects on the Iraqi people.

We note with pleasure the continued practice of including in the report monthly assessments by former Presidents of the Council. With these voluntary assessments, the report of the Security Council is more analytical and insightful. It helps non-member States to have a better and deeper understanding of the work of the Council. We also commend the fact that the report includes information about the work of the Council's subsidiary bodies, particularly the sanctions committees. We hope that this good example will be continued in future reports of the Council.

In a nutshell: on the one hand, due recognition should be given for improvements in the working procedures and the business of the Council. On the other hand, we are sorry to note that the Council, more often than not, has not proved to be the useful tool of all States Members of the United Nations. Some members of the Council, particularly certain permanent members, still act only on their own behalf rather than on behalf of the general membership as is stipulated in the Charter. It is high time that this was corrected, unless we want the Council to be irrelevant to current world realities.

Viet Nam has on various occasions called for an expanded and reformed Council. We strongly believe that urgent efforts should be exerted to make the Council truly representative and accountable and its work truly democratic and legitimate. We have also expressed our support for the curtailment of the veto power, as an interim measure.

Before concluding my statement, I wish to extend our warmest congratulations to Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore on their election to membership of the Council last week. We strongly

believe that those countries will make worthy contributions to the work of the Council.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation is grateful to the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Martin Andjaba of Namibia, for his precise, objective and factual presentation of the Council's fifty-fifth annual report to the General Assembly. The consideration of this report, pursuant to Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, affords the Assembly an opportunity to examine all aspects of the work of the Council — substantive as well as procedural — and to make constructive critiques and recommendations for further improvements in the work of the Council. It also provides for more effective coordination and interaction between the Assembly and the Council.

My delegation is gratified at the ongoing efforts to improve the format and content of the annual report of the Council. In its current format, the report now contains a fuller and much more accurate record of the Council's activities, beyond a mere compilation of already published documents, as was the case in the past. The inclusion in the report of brief descriptions of the Council's informal consultations of the whole, information on the work of the Council's various subsidiary bodies, and assessments by the Presidents of the Council has made the report more substantive and, hopefully, more useful to the larger membership of the Organization. A particularly welcome development is the trend towards a more in-depth reporting on the work of the Council by its Presidents, which is a departure from past practice. This trend towards greater transparency in the work of the Council, which was initiated largely by the elected members of the Council, will, hopefully, become a permanent feature in the working methods of the Council.

However, further improvements may be necessary in order to make future reports of the Council more comprehensive and useful to the general membership. General Assembly resolution 51/193 of 1996 contains a number of important and constructive recommendations for such improvements. At the same time, discussions in the Assembly and in the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform have also addressed this matter and have made constructive suggestions. One of these recommendations was the need for submission of special reports of the Council, as provided for under Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter. We believe that the submission to the Assembly, when necessary, of such special reports highlighting major critical issues before the Council, will contribute to even closer interaction and coordination between the two principal organs of this Organization. There have been situations in the recent past in which the submission of such special reports would have been extremely valuable to States Members of the United Nations.

It is also gratifying to note that the working methods of the Council represent an ongoing process that continues to evolve. This is largely due to the ever-increasing calls from the general membership of the United Nations, as well as from within the Council itself, for more openness, enhanced transparency and, most important of all, increased effectiveness of the Council. Wide-ranging and constructive discussions are continuing, with the objective of finding ways and means of enabling the Council to more effectively carry out its primary responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security on behalf of the general membership of the Organization.

A number of practical improvements to the Council's procedures have indeed been effected and have been welcomed by the larger membership. These include, the regular briefings given by the President of the Council, among others, to non-member States on issues discussed during the informal consultations of the Council, as well as the increased frequency of open debates and open briefings, with the participation of interested Member States that are not members of the Council. It is to be hoped that these briefing sessions will be fully utilized by the larger membership.

The convening of the so-called thematic debates in the Council has become a useful forum for more effective and broader consultations between Council members and interested Member States not members of the Council, as well as relevant intergovernmental organizations and experts from the Secretariat and United Nations specialized agencies and other international bodies. These thematic debates provide an opportunity for the participants to address complex and cross-cutting issues relating to the overall question of peace and security. They contribute to enriching the Council's understanding of complex peace and security issues and to improving its decision-making process.

While the Council's informal consultations have their purpose and are, in many ways, indispensable, transparency demands that there should be more

frequent public or formal meetings of the Council. It is gratifying to note that during the period covered by the report, we have seen an increase in the number of such meetings of the Council. Also, increasingly, the Council now receives briefings from the Secretariat or the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General in respect of existing United Nations peacekeeping operations in the format of the open meetings to which the larger membership of the Organization is invited. The Council has also resorted to the more frequent convening of so-called private formal meetings, with the participation of concerned or directly affected States, and at times with others that have special interests in such private meetings. Such private meetings allow for candid exchanges of views between Council members and representatives of concerned States that may not be possible in an open setting. In this sense, the so-called private meetings of the Council do serve a purpose.

With the more frequent use of the format of private meetings of the Council, the mechanism of the Arria formula has reverted to what it was originally intended to be, namely a mechanism for informal exchanges of views between Council members and individuals representing non-governmental organizations or institutions that could contribute to a better understanding by Council members of particular issues under that body's consideration. We are pleased with the more frequent use of private meetings of the Council, as provided for under its rules of procedure, as well as with the proper use of the Arria formula.

Even as the Council's working procedures continue to evolve, there should be more focused attention in addressing the most contentious aspect of the Council's decision-making process, that is, the anachronistic institution of the veto. Experience has shown, as recently as late last week, that the Council's ability to deal with pressing international crises promptly and effectively is affected by the veto or the threat of use of the veto. Pending its ultimate demise, there is a need to regulate and restrict the use of the veto to ensure a more democratic functioning of the Security Council. We urge those members of the Council with veto power to manifest the necessary political will in this regard. We are pleased with the great restraint shown by the majority of the permanent members with respect to the use or threat of use of the veto.

My delegation welcomes the more frequent dispatch of Council missions to conflict situations, such as those that were sent to East Timor, Kosovo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and, more recently, to Sierra Leone. Even though these missions may not result in major breakthroughs in the resolution of the conflict, they afford Council members a better understanding of the real situation on the ground and a better appreciation of the nature, complexity and dynamics of the conflict. The deeper insights that such missions bring to bear in Council discussions of specific conflict situations can only result in enhancing the decision-making process in the Council. The missions sent to Africa, namely to the Great Lakes region, to Ethiopia and Eritrea and to Sierra Leone, are particularly important to the Council given its preoccupation with the conflict situations on the continent. They will result in more informed and focused discussions on the conflicts and on the role of the Council in resolving them.

Clearly, the success of any Council action in addressing conflict situations around the globe is determined by many factors, including the cooperation and political will of the parties concerned to achieve peace. But the effectiveness and credibility of the Council in carrying out its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security largely depend on determined efforts — prompt, united and concrete action — by the Council itself. Clearly, this will require political will on the part of Council members, which, if not forthcoming, will result in paralysis in the Council, thereby blocking any concrete action by the Council. Needless to say, this will undermine they very credibility of the Council in the eyes of the international community.

The lack of political will on the part of the Council can inadvertently result in a selective approach in addressing conflict situations. This should be avoided. The Council must deal with conflict situations in an even-handed manner, irrespective of where the crisis occurs. A non-selective approach by the Council is vital to ensure its credibility and prestige, as well as the necessary support for its actions.

Sanctions remain a legitimate instrument of the Council in giving effect to its decisions with regard to certain States or parties to a conflict. While recognizing that this enforcement mechanism is provided for in Article 41 of the Charter, my delegation strongly believes that sanctions are an exceptional

measure that should be resorted to only in extreme situations, after all peaceful means of influencing the behaviour of the States, Governments or other authorities concerned have been exhausted. Sanctions should be imposed only after careful consideration of their objectives and should be properly targeted, with specified time-frames, with clear provisions for their lifting and in full cognisance of their possible impact on third States.

Upon the imposition of sanctions, the Council should establish a clear mechanism for an assessment of the impact of the sanctions. The Council should avoid imposing blanket or comprehensive sanctions on an entire country because of the likely debilitating effects that that would have on the populace. Sanctions should be lifted as soon as possible once they have served their purpose or are no longer pertinent to the situation. My delegation is encouraged by the current efforts in the Council to address, in a comprehensive manner, all issues pertaining to sanctions, and to move in the direction of more focused and targeted sanctions.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to take this opportunity to warmly congratulate the newly elected non-permanent members of the Council, namely, Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore. Malaysia pledges its full support and cooperation to them as they prepare to take their seats on the Council in January next year. We trust they will build on the achievements made thus far and forge new breakthroughs in enhancing further the transparency and effectiveness of the Council during their tenure. We are confident that they will do so. We wish them every success.

Mr. Satoh (Japan): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the five countries — Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore — that were elected to non-permanent membership of the Council last week. The palpable excitement which filled this Hall on election day was testimony to the importance Member States attach to the Council's work. I wish to convey to the newly elected members, and to all the members of the Security Council, assurances of Japan's full support as they discharge their enormous responsibilities.

I also wish to express my appreciation to the President of the Security Council, Mr. Martin Andjaba, Ambassador of Namibia, for his introduction of the report of the Security Council on its work from June 1999 to June 2000. This is indeed a useful document, and I very much appreciate the enhanced monthly assessments made by the former Presidents, particularly the detailed assessments of the work of the Council made by the non-permanent members during their tenures.

It has become increasingly apparent in recent years that the maintenance of international peace and security requires a comprehensive approach, one that addresses not only political and military but also economic and social dimensions, which are the root causes of conflicts. The open debate chaired by United States Vice-President Al Gore last January on the devastating impact of AIDS in Africa is perhaps the most telling example of the Council's wider approach to peace and security issues.

The need to expand the perspective from which we consider international peace and security is also evident in the recent multifaceted mandates of peacekeeping operations, which, in addition to military and police activities, often extend to nation-building and include activities in the area of development and governance. The doubling of the total budget of peacekeeping operations in the past two years is also a reflection of that need. Against this background, the cooperation of the entire international community in the maintenance of peace and security is becoming ever-more essential. It is largely through the support and cooperation of non-member States, which provide personnel as well as financial resources for peacekeeping and peacemaking activities, that the decisions of the Security Council are implemented. Our experiences in East Timor, Kosovo and Sierra Leone are cases in point.

I heartily support the recent increase in the number of so-called open debates and open briefings. The need to engage interested non-members in the Council's deliberations and to have their views reflected in the Council's decisions has been repeatedly stressed in the course of the deliberations of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform. However, I must point out that non-members are not given the opportunity to express their views at open briefings. Moreover, the considerations underlying the Council's decisions on peacekeeping operations are not always clear to non-members. I would therefore like to suggest that every effort be made to hold open debates rather than open briefings, so that non-member

countries are given the opportunity to ask questions and to make their views known.

I also welcome the Council's recent practice of holding informal consultations with the participation of troop contributors. But that is not enough. I would like to bring to the attention of the Assembly the statement by the President of the Security Council of 28 March 1996 and note by the President of the Security Council of 30 October 1998, contained in documents S/PRST/1996/13 and S/1998/1016 respectively, which point out that the Council should continue the existing practice of inviting Member States which make special contributions to peacekeeping operations other than troops and civilian police, such as contributions to trust funds, logistics and equipment.

I have to point out that this practice has not been followed. The exclusion from those consultations of countries making such contributions runs counter to the trend towards greater transparency and accountability.

While we support the steps the Security Council has taken to improve its interaction with the rest of the United Nations membership, these measures will not in themselves enhance the Council's legitimacy and effectiveness. In order to make the Council truly effective in tackling the increasingly complex challenges it faces, its composition must be fundamentally reformed to reflect the realities of today's international community. Let me, therefore, stress again my conviction, which I believe is shared by a majority of countries, that both the permanent and non-permanent membership of the Council must be expanded, and that both developing and developed countries must be included in the expanded permanent membership.

The fact that more than 150 countries stressed the need to reform the Security Council in the course of the Millennium Summit and in the subsequent general debate is a reflection of the growing frustration among the United Nations membership over the slow progress that has been made in that regard. Indeed, as stated in the Millennium Summit Declaration, we should intensify our efforts to realize genuine reform to ensure that the Security Council can effectively carry out its crucially important work in the years to come.

Mr. Niehaus (Costa Rica) *(spoke in Spanish)*: Consideration of the Security Council's annual report is one of the main activities of the General Assembly. We would like to thank the Ambassador of Namibia, for his excellent introduction.

Undoubtedly, the Security Council is the Organization's most visible body in the international public's eye, given the emergency situations in which it is called upon to play a leading role. However, we must not forget that the decisions of the Security Council are not exclusively the decisions of its members, but rather those of the international community as a whole. Ultimately, the Council is acting on behalf of all Members of this Organization. For this reason, it is possible to say today that both the Security Council as a whole and each of its members are presenting accounts to those whom they represent.

At the same time, the other Members of the Organization have an obligation to consider the work of the Council conscientiously in order to determine if the Council is effectively complying with its responsibilities and faithfully representing our interests.

Unfortunately, events over the past year have not provided a very positive image of the Security Council's work. In Sierra Leone hundreds of United Nations peacekeepers were taken hostage. In Timor the Organization's personnel fell victim to cold-blooded murder. In the Congo, cities have been bombed and innumerable massacres have taken place, while in the Horn of Africa we have witnessed an incomprehensible war, despite the last-minute personal diplomatic efforts of a number of Security Council members.

The responsibility for these setbacks seems to be clear. As revealed in the Brahimi report:

> "Most occurred because the Security Council and the Member States crafted and supported ambiguous, inconsistent and under-funded mandates and then stood back and watched as they failed." *(A/55/305, para. 266)*

If we are to trust this report, we must conclude that the Council has repeatedly failed in its work.

Nevertheless, my country recognizes that coordinated action by the international community, through this Organization, is the sole mechanism that humanity can rely on to face the perils that lie in ambush. For that reason, we cannot lose faith in the Security Council; rather, we must strengthen it.

We know that in some circles it has been suggested that humanitarian intervention by a group of States particularly interested in a given crisis might be a valid substitute for the work of the Council. My delegation does not share this thesis. Unilateral humanitarian intervention can easily become an excuse for ignoring the prohibition of the use of force. The doctrine of a just war ultimately is reduced to legitimizing war, destruction and death through weak theological arguments.

We believe that banning the use of force is the cornerstone for the society of nations, and it must continue to be that. On this prohibition is based the trust of the majority of the States which deem this Organization the main guarantor for their security, and on it is based every effort to achieve disarmament, as well as all supporting initiatives to resolve disputes peacefully. We fear that if this ban is weakened, the door to violence in international relations will be opened.

Under the legal regime established by the Charter, the Security Council is the only legitimate mechanism available to the international community as a whole for responding to armed conflicts or humanitarian crises of such a serious nature that, in and of themselves, they become threats to peace. With the very limited exception of the right to legitimate self-defence, prior authorization by the Security Council is essential for any initiative that could require the use of force or that attempts to dominate the States involved in conflict.

In this context, it is essential that we develop a new strategy and doctrine for the establishment and conduct of peacekeeping operations, in light of the experience gained over the past decade. The Brahimi report is but one step forward in this direction, and we believe that we need an in-depth and transparent discussion within the General Assembly on the recommendations and views expressed in that report.

The impartiality of the peacekeeping forces, the consent of parties in conflict and the limiting of the use of force to legitimate defence must continue to be the basic principles of the political-military doctrine of peacekeeping operations. Any departure from these principles, if such is really deemed essential, ought to be dealt with through the greatest caution and forethought.

Over the past year, we have seen the establishment and growth of a new kind of peacekeeping operation: the transitional civil administrations in Kosovo and East Timor. This kind of operation presents an unprecedented challenge for the Organization, creating obligations and expectations never contemplated in the past. The United Nations, on its own, is expected to provide basic services in health, education, public administration, justice, security, postal service and tax collection; and it is also to promote economic reconstruction and the establishment of democracy in an area of transition. Despite the intrinsic difficulties in a task of this magnitude, the experiences in Kosovo and East Timor have, in general, been positive. They provide us with examples of the capacity of this institution to act when there is the political will to respond effectively to the requirements of the situation on the ground. We feel that this experience should serve as a model for future actions.

Over the past year we have also seen some positive developments in Security Council practices. These developments should be encouraged.

First, we welcome the sending of observer missions made up of Permanent Representatives of Member States. We believe that such missions allow members of the Council to familiarize themselves at first hand with the requirements of the situation they must address. At the same time, the missions allow members to send a clear message to the parties. However, we believe that the scope of these missions should not be exaggerated. In this regard, it would be well to assess the true results of the Security Council missions in April and May of this year to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kosovo, and Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Secondly, we welcome the candour, courage and enthusiasm of the group of experts charged with considering sanctions against UNITA. We also admire the honesty, independence and the bravery of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. We believe that such investigations are an essential aspect of the work of the Organization and that their high standards should become the norm for Security Council activities.

Thirdly, we appreciate the changes in the approach to imposing sanctions regimes. In particular we welcome the fact that the bans imposed against the parties in the Horn of Africa under resolution 1298

(2000) were imposed for a limited period of time, without the possibility of automatic extension. Any extension of these measures would require a subsequent official decision of the Security Council. My delegation has for several years advocated such time limits on sanctions regimes. We hope that this precedent will be followed in future cases.

In order to realize its purposes and principles the United Nations needs the firm and constant support of all Member States. It is therefore essential to provide this Organization with sufficient financial, operational and logistical resources — resources that are proportionate to the tasks entrusted to it. In this regard we need to reassess the possibility of establishing permanent reserves of military, civilian and political experts who are available at a moment's notice, as well as reserves of materiel for missions. At the same time, troop-contributing countries should provide duly trained and equipped personnel. We need to give peacekeeping missions clear mandates in order to avoid conflicts regarding the control of these missions, and we also need to establish uniform procedures and operational norms for the conduct of these missions. In short, we must see peacekeeping missions as one of the normal and ongoing activities of the Organization and not as exceptional undertakings.

We are aware that it is expensive to maintain international peace and security effectively. Most of the proposals we are endorsing require additional financial resources. If Member States are truly committed to the maintenance of peace, greater efforts must be made to resolve the financial crisis afflicting the Organization. My delegation believes that those States that contribute to endangering international peace and security — that is, those countries that are the main producers of weapons or that have disproportionately large military budgets — should contribute more to the budget for peacekeeping operations than those nations whose military budgets are relatively small in relation to their gross national products.

In addition, we must note that armed conflicts and humanitarian crises are closely related phenomena. The causes of conflicts can be found in poverty, social injustice, the systematic disregard of human rights and the lack of democratic mechanisms for resolving political, ideological and social conflicts.

Promoting international peace and security involves more than setting up peacekeeping missions or calling for negotiations. The work of the Security Council is limited to dealing with specific events when all the previous safeguards for peaceful coexistence have failed. However, defending peace requires preventive efforts before conflicts occur and peace-building efforts at the end of conflicts. Promoting peace requires an ongoing and sustained effort to create an atmosphere in which there is mutual respect and violence is rejected. True and sustainable peace can only be achieved when decent living conditions are guaranteed for all inhabitants, when there is a sufficient level of economic development to meet all the basic needs, when fundamental rights are respected and when disputes are resolved by democratic means.

My delegation believes that, in accordance with the distribution of tasks laid down in the Charter, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council are the appropriate bodies for the implementation and coordination of such sustained efforts to prevent conflicts and to build peace. In this context, invests in development, education, health, human rights and democracy are direct investments in future peace — and, therefore, work of that kind is as important as the activities of the Security Council.

In assessing the work of the Security Council over the past year, we must also reflect on the activities of each of our States and on the contributions that have been made to the Organization during this same period. Have we supported the United Nations in deeds as we have supported it in words? Have we furnished the necessary human and material resources so that the Organization can do its work? Have we provided the necessary political support? In short, the successes of the Security Council are the successes of the entire international community, just as the failures of the Council are the failure of us all.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): At the outset, please allow me to thank the President of the Security Council for the month of October, Ambassador Martin Andjaba, for the excellent presentation he made today of the annual report of the Security Council for the period 16 June 1999 to 15 June 2000. I would also like to thank the Security Council secretariat for the excellent work it did in producing the voluminous report that we have before us today.

Also before I begin, I would like to thank all the countries that have congratulated the five new members of the Security Council elected this year,

including Singapore. We realize that we have a big job to do, and we will try to do it to the best of our abilities.

In his seminal Millennium Assembly report entitled "We the peoples", Secretary-General Kofi Annan drew a vivid analogy of our world as a global village. If we use this analogy of the global village, we can see the Security Council's role as akin to that of a magistracy that has been entrusted and authorized by the village to keep the peace. But this magistracy has a two-tier structure. It comprises first a small group of five villagers, who, by virtue mainly of an historical fait accompli, have been given security of tenure and other privileges.

The second group consists of a bigger, but significantly less influential group of 10 members of the community, chosen by the village to serve for a limited duration based on their ability to advance the cause of peace in the village. In exchange for the magistracy's agreeing to undertake primary responsibility for maintaining peace and security in the global village on behalf of the community, this magistracy is granted wide-ranging powers. The village community has, in turn, agreed to be bound by decisions of the magistracy.

Surprisingly, the magistracy has few obligations in return to the village community. One of these, of course, is to submit an annual written report that contains information on the work undertaken by the magistracy. Article 15 (1) of the Charter states:

> "The General Assembly shall receive and consider annual and special reports from the Security Council; these reports shall include an account of the measures that the Security Council has decided upon or taken to maintain international peace and security."

That is why we are here today. These annual reports, it would seem, are the only institutional avenue through which the global village community can inform itself of the activities of the magistracy. Each year, at an annual gathering of the village community, several members take the floor to express their views on the annual report and the magistracy. Some are even critical. However, there is little evidence so far that these discussions have had any significant impact on the magistracy, which remains very much an instrument of the most powerful magistrates. As John Foster Dulles wrote in a somewhat prescient fashion in 1950:

> "The Security Council is not a body that merely enforces agreed law. It is a law unto itself . ... No principles of law are laid down to guide it; it can decide in accordance with what it thinks is expedient." (*War or Peace*, Macmillan, NY, 1950)

The key question that we therefore have to address under this agenda item is whether this state of affairs is satisfactory. At the Millennium Assembly gathering of our global village, should we merely comment on and criticize this annual report, or should we do more? Should we, for example, ask the magistracy to account for its failures to perform its role in maintaining peace and security? Should we also seek from the magistracy a clarification for its non-action on issues relating to peace and security, particularly when such non-action is tantamount to a dereliction of its primary responsibility? This is no abstract question for small States. Small States, which depend on the Security Council for their security, will find their lives seriously imperilled if the Council fails to fulfil its obligations under the Charter.

The bottom-line issue is accountability. I do not think that many will challenge the merits of rendering the Security Council accountable for its action and non-action, including those members holding positions of special privilege in the Council. There is, after all, ample proof that accountability and its sister principle, transparency, are now widely regarded as integral parts of good governance.

The consideration of agenda item 11 today has assumed added significance against the backdrop of the reports on the fall of Srebrenica and the Rwanda genocide of 1994 and ongoing consultations on the implementation of the recommendations of the Brahimi Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. I would, in fact, commend to all a careful study of these reports. They tell a sobering story of gross ineptitude, the primacy of narrow national interests among key members of the Security Council over everything else, and the protection of soldiers over civilians, all of which conspired to cause the loss of countless civilian lives in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda.

Perhaps no other report on these recent debacles of international diplomacy serves as a greater indictment of the Security Council, the Secretariat and, indeed, the international community as a whole — all

of us — than the report of the International Panel of Eminent Personalities appointed by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to investigate the events leading to the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. This report was released in early June 2000, four months ago. It is puzzling, perhaps even shocking, that there has been no move to have the OAU report discussed by the Security Council. Let me quote a few pertinent findings of the OAU report to explain the need for enhancing accountability in the Security Council.

> "[T]he evidence is clear that there are a small number of major actors whose intervention could directly have prevented, halted or reduced the slaughter ... Nigeria's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari, has reminded us that, 'There is nothing wrong with the United Nations that is not attributable to its members,' which led him to conclude: "Without a doubt, it was the Security Council, especially its most powerful members, and the international community as a whole, that failed the people of Rwanda in their gravest hour of need ...
>
> "The price of this betrayal was paid by countless Rwandans, overwhelmingly Tutsi, who will forever remain anonymous to the rest of the world. In contrast, none of the key actors on the Security Council or in the Secretariat who failed to prevent the genocide has ever paid any kind of price. No resignations have been demanded. No one has resigned on a matter of principle. Many of their careers have flourished greatly since 1994. Instead of international accountability, it appears that international impunity is the rule of the day." (*Special report of the International Panel of Eminent Personalities to Investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda and the Surrounding Events, paras. 15.40 and 15.41*)

That last suggestion is particularly ironic, as the Security Council has itself never hesitated in the past to decry the culture of impunity that purportedly exists among state and non-state actors in many troubled parts of the world. It is also inexplicable that, while individual countries that had been implicated in the incident have extended their apologies officially for their part in failing to prevent deaths in Rwanda, a few others have not. As for the Security Council, the word "sorry" appears to be unmentionable.

It is not my intention to oversimplify the question of accountability. This is not an easy issue by any means. It can also become a highly charged political issue. At the same time, accountability has implications in the legal areas of culpability and reparations. We need to confront the issue fairly and squarely, however, lest the credibility of the Security Council erode further in the coming years.

In this respect, there are several questions that we should address. First and perhaps most obvious, to whom and/or to which body should the Security Council be held accountable? The answer should be clear enough. We should first recall that, in their Millennium Declaration adopted at the end of the Millennium Assembly last September, our leaders reaffirmed

> "the central position of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations." (*resolution 55/2, para. 30*)

The relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter would also support the view that the Security Council, as the beneficiary of specific powers granted by the Members of the United Nations, has a fiduciary duty to account to the General Assembly for its actions. Article 24 (1) of the Charter explicitly states that the Security Council exercises its powers in maintaining international peace and security on behalf — and I stress, on behalf — of the Members of the United Nations.

Secondly, what criteria should we use to determine the performance of the Security Council? A related question is whether the report of the Security Council in its existing format — the thick document that we have before us — contains adequate information for the General Assembly to make such an assessment. We note that, earlier today, the Permanent Representative of India asked several pertinent questions about the structure and contents of these annual reports, and we hope that these questions will be addressed.

Given that the objective of this review exercise is for the General Assembly to assure itself that the Security Council has indeed discharged its primary responsibility, we should be examining such issues as timeliness and appropriateness of action and other measures taken by the Council in response to specific developments.

Thirdly, how do we ensure that the views of the General Assembly expressed during this debate on this agenda item are officially transmitted to the Security Council and then taken cognisance of by the Council? On this issue, I note the absence of any formal mechanism for the comments and views of members of the General Assembly expressed during the debate on this agenda item to be communicated to the Security Council. No doubt, the members of the Security Council are represented in this Hall. But can they also respond to comments made here? This annual debate could be more interactive if members of the Security Council could provide immediate feedback to issues raised by Member States during this debate. It may also be useful for the Security Council to meet immediately after this agenda item is debated in the General Assembly to discuss and perhaps implement some of the suggestions made here.

The suggestions we have made today may seem a little radical. But the issue at stake here is the continuing credibility and authority of a key organ of the United Nations. Our hope is that our suggestions today will motivate or stimulate other proposals on how cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council on matters concerning international peace and security could be further strengthened. At the same time, we are also fully aware that a delicate balance must be struck between the need for the Security Council to preserve its ability to take prompt and effective action on issues on one hand, and the continuing demands for greater transparency and accountability on the other. The work of the Security Council must not be hampered by our work here.

Finally, we would also like to stress here that accountability is not an end in itself. Beyond acknowledging that mistakes have been made in the past, it is also imperative that the Security Council should apply lessons learned from its experiences — both failures and successes — in its future work. Eventually, it is our common goal to enhance the capacity of the Security Council to discharge the primary responsibility that it has been entrusted with by members of this Organization.

Mr. Stuart (Australia): Ambassador Mahbubani is always a hard act to follow and I think he has made a particularly interesting intervention today. I thank him for that. My delegation would also like to thank Ambassador Andjaba of Namibia for presenting the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly today in its capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of October.

It seems that each year in this debate we note the growing demands placed on the Security Council by an uncertain and volatile international security environment. Regrettably, the last year has been no exception. Tension and conflict persist in many parts of the world. Old conflicts continue to cost lives and untold hardship. And as we are acutely aware in our own part of the world, new disputes have flared, posing new threats to international peace and security.

As the Security Council's report to the General Assembly (A/55/2) shows, the Council has been called on to play a central role in addressing many of these. It has been a demanding year in which the Council has confronted complex and sometimes seemingly intractable disputes. Sometimes cooperation from disputing parties has been, to put it mildly, questionable. The Council has had to make some difficult decisions. Four new major peacekeeping missions have been established — in East Timor, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia and Eritrea. The Council has, in many other ways, contributed to the maintenance of peace and security in various parts of the world.

One of the clear lessons that my delegation draws from experience in the last twelve months is that the circumstances of each dispute are different. The specifics in each case, the historical and political contexts, vary widely. The kinds of response the Council might consider to any dispute will need to be tailored to the particular circumstances.

I draw attention to this point to underline something my delegation has highlighted in discussions on the report of the Security Council in previous years: the need for the Council to look for new and innovative ways to exercise its influence and authority and to promote peace and security. My delegation in the past been critical of the excessive rigidities of the Council's work practices, and we have urged Members to look beyond the limitations imposed by narrow interpretation of the rules of procedure to find new ways of doing things.

By our assessment, important steps have been taken in this direction over the last year. A number of Council Presidents, and the Council membership as a whole, have been willing to look for ways of more effectively conducting the Council's business and

asserting its influence. I note that Ambassador Hasmy of Malaysia has described some of those efforts in his intervention today.

Perhaps most significant of the innovations from my delegation's point of view over the last year or so has been the series of Council missions to regional trouble spots. Building on the success of the Council's mission to East Timor a little over a year ago, a number of further missions have taken place since, including to Sierra Leone and Ethiopia and Eritrea. They have been important elements of the international community's response to these conflicts. They help to inform the Council about the exigencies of the disputes, and send an important signal to the disputing parties about the strength of international concern.

We have also seen a welcome evolution in the Council's procedures with regard to meetings. The series of meetings that took place in January this year, bringing together the leaders of several countries directly interested in the conflict in the Great Lakes region of Africa, is one example. Other ways have been found to enable disputing parties to put their positions directly to the Council. This more flexible approach to the convening of meetings, formalized in the presidential note adopted earlier this year, represents an important step towards a more open, effective and transparent Council.

We note from the report of the Security Council that there has been a reduction in the number of informal consultations, or so-called consultations of the whole, over the period of the report compared to the year before. There has also been an increase in the number of formal, open meetings. This trend, to the extent that it reflects a real shift to greater transparency and openness, is also welcome.

In saying this, my delegation does not advocate the holding of open meetings just for the sake of holding them. They should be used genuinely as opportunities for Member States to put their views on issues of direct and immediate relevance to them and to the Council. When such meetings are held, Council members should listen carefully to the views of the non-Council members, bearing in mind their responsibility under the Charter to act on behalf of the whole membership.

This trend towards greater openness is welcome, but, of course, more that needs to be done. The Brahimi report makes a number of important recommendations about the way the Council deals with aspects of peacekeeping, including defining clear and achievable mandates and enabling the participation of troop-contributing countries in key aspects of the planning and implementation process. Australia supports these recommendations, and we look forward to moving ahead with the Security Council and other Member States to implement them.

The key element missing in this process of change is, however, expansion of the size of the Council's permanent and non-permanent membership, as well as related reforms covering the veto and periodic review. We look forward to addressing this question under the relevant agenda item later in this session.

May I conclude with a brief expression of appreciation and congratulations to all the members of the Council for their contributions over the last year, and particularly to those whose elected terms conclude at the end of December: Argentina, Canada, Malaysia, Namibia and the Netherlands. I would also like to warmly congratulate the newly elected members of the Council on their election, and pledge Australia's full support for the work that faces them.

Mr. Tello (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Namibia and President of the Security Council for the month of October, Ambassador Martin Andjaba, for introducing the report on the activities of the Council for the period 16 June 1999 to 15 June 2000. Undoubtedly, that compendium of the Council's documents and resolutions stemming from its work over a period of 12 months is extremely useful as a quick-reference document for academics and researchers interested in decisions taken by the Council.

While recognizing the efforts of the members of the Security Council to improve the content of its report, we must nevertheless express our disappointment that the right of Member States to expect a substantive document has not yet been fully met. We once again urge the members of the Council to take measures to ensure that those of us who do not participate in the Council's debates can, at the very least, turn to this document for a substantive look at how issues under the Council's consideration are treated. We would like the report to go beyond mere formal compliance with the obligation imposed by Article 24, paragraph 3, and Article 15, paragraph 1, of

the Charter of the United Nations, and we would like to see respect for the right of Member States to have substantive information on the Council's deliberations, during which decisions are made with which all Member States must subsequently comply.

Although there has been an increase in the number of open meetings which all Member States may attend and/or participate in, we continue to be surprised by the trend of holding informal consultations as the normal working procedure of the Council, in disregard of the provisions of rule 48 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure. That rule clearly establishes that, as a general rule, the Council should meet publicly. Unfortunately, the exception provided for in that rule has become the Council's practice, and it meets daily behind closed doors in informal consultations — a format that is not foreseen in the rules. Open meetings only serve to formalize substantive agreements arrived at private gatherings. Similarly, we feel it is inappropriate to convene private meetings that do not allow non-members of the Council and parties directly involved to participate. If we take into account the fact that the Council's decisions affect all Members of the Organization, then it is inconceivable to accept the mysterious and secretive way in which the Council carries out its work.

We congratulate the members of the Council that have prepared reports on the work of the Council during the months they held the presidency. In particular, we congratulate those that asked that their reports be published as official documents. We invite them to improve the content of their reports so that they are useful to all Members of the Organization, and we urge them to promote actions that allow the needs of all Member States to be met and foster transparency and democratization in the Council.

The work of the Council Committee of Experts on working methods is a good indication that its members are aware of the importance of making the work of the Council more transparent and democratic. Similarly, discussion of these matters in the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform is very useful within the framework of measures to improve the work of the Council.

We are convinced that, in strict compliance with the provisions of the Charter, the Council must limit itself to the actions provided for in Article 24, rapid and effective responses to maintain international peace and security and the prevention of the worsening of conflict situations. It is necessary to keep in mind that the Council is not a deliberative body and that it lacks the ability to issue generally applicable regulatory provisions. As we have said on other occasions, that sort of action is entrusted to the General Assembly, which is the most representative body of the international community. The Assembly's broad competency includes discussing any questions or matters within the scope of the Charter, as provided in Article 10; considering general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security; discussing the entire question of the maintenance of international peace and security, as established in Article 11; and discussing any other issue stipulated in Article 13.

We reiterate our position that the Council should limit its work to the spheres of action entrusted to it and that it should not continue to make general pronouncements with regard to matters not under its purview. The General Assembly's role is to carry out deliberations and establish norms and doctrines on contemporary problems. It is up to the Council to act on crisis situations as they arise.

We reiterate our appeal to the members of the Council to contribute to the irreversible process of openness, transparency and reform of its working methods, to which Mexico, and the vast majority of the Members of the United Nations, are fully committed.

Lastly, my delegation would like to congratulate Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore on their election to the Council. We wish them every success in the course of the next two years.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): The Ambassador of Singapore asked whether the members of the Security Council present in the Hall wished to respond to his comments. I would be happy to do so. In responding, I would also like to respond to what has just been said by the Ambassador of Mexico.

Today, I do not intend to address every subject dealt with by the Security Council in the course of the 12 months covered by the report before the General Assembly. I simply wish to make a few comments on the working methods of the Council and on the way it discharges its responsibilities for the maintenance of peace and security. First of all, I would like to make a preliminary comment to illustrate that the Security

Council is not as powerless and paralysed as certain critics claim it is.

Much has been done since June 1999. Despite its internal differences — which are perfectly normal and often healthy — the Council has, among other things, been able to establish complex missions for the administration of territories: the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). After lengthy negotiations, the Council agreed on framework resolution 1284 (1999) for resumed cooperation between Iraq and the United Nations, even if, as we believe, it is still necessary to clarify and finalize certain aspects and to have a positive response from Iraq.

The Council has decided also on an approach to the problem of Sierra Leone which comprises several facets — such as the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), diamonds and justice — even though much remains to be done.

It is true that little progress has been made in some other areas; I am thinking in particular of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. But we must stress here the responsibility that lies with the parties themselves. We cannot make peace without them.

Concerning the functioning of the Security Council, three developments seem to me particularly noteworthy. The first is the Security Council's effort to obtain better information about the conflicts of which it is seized, an effort which has three elements. The first is the dispatch of Council field missions. Since September 1999, the Council has dispatched five missions: to Timor, to Kosovo, to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other Central African countries, to Ethiopia and Eritrea, and just last week to Sierra Leone. Next month a mission will travel to East Timor and then to West Timor. It is clear to all how useful these missions are. They make it possible to make on-the-spot in-depth assessments of complex problems; they are an invaluable reality-check. Such missions could also be dispatched in advance of the formulation or modification of the mandates of peacekeeping operations.

The second way to improve our understanding of a problem is to develop direct contacts with the parties to a conflict and with other regional actors, as demonstrated by several recent initiatives. In January of this year, Ambassador Holbrooke of the United States organized a Security Council meeting with the heads of State of the signatories of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and some other countries of the region. In June, during its presidency of the Council, France continued that direct dialogue by convening a meeting of the Council with members of the Political Committee of the Lusaka Agreement, comprising its State and non-State signatories. That meeting was held in private, and it provided an opportunity for a most useful, frank, interactive discussion. It led to the adoption of Council resolution 1304 (2000) and to the adoption of a statement by the Political Committee. Then, in June, the Security Council held a private meeting with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Ministerial Mediation and Security Committee on Sierra Leone, an exchange of views that was, again, very frank. Meetings of this kind should be encouraged with a view, inter alia, to improving interaction with regional actors and regional organizations with a central role to play.

Finally, the Security Council has acknowledged that troop contributors must be consulted more closely and more regularly. Experience shows that in the past there was insufficient dialogue between the Security Council and troop contributors. Such dialogue is essential for better understanding of the objectives that are being pursued, and for unity of concept and action between the Council, which decides on the mandates of peacekeeping operations, and the troop contributors, which implement them. Such dialogue is particularly necessary when there is great tension in the field or when a mandate must be adapted to a changed situation. Accordingly, the French delegation recently proposed a private meeting of the Security Council with countries contributing troops to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone; in the light of that initial, most interesting, experience, we hope that such meetings will take place regularly.

The second recent development relates to the Council's tools for taking action. These include sanctions. Since June 1999 the Council has adopted new sanctions, but has taken care to learn from past experience; these sanctions are targeted, especially in the sense that they directly affect those whose behaviour they are aimed at changing. The sanctions were put in place for a defined period of time, which can be extended if the Council so decides. The Council has also discussed the effectiveness of sanctions

regimes by setting up expert panels to consider how they are implemented and complied with, and to make recommendations to the Council in that regard. Finally, in the same spirit, the Council has begun discussing the link between the illegal exploitation of natural resources — in particular precious materials — and the continuation of conflicts, especially in Angola, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. All these developments are welcome and should be encouraged.

Secondly, peacekeeping operations have themselves undergone some changes. There has been rich and useful debate on this subject since the publication of the report (A/55/305) of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, whose recommendations we hope will be speedily implemented. Yet it should be noted that over the past year the Security Council has taken decisions along the same lines: its resolution 1291 (2000), on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), requested the Secretary-General to plan for any future deployment of an operation. And now the performance of additional tasks by UNAMSIL has been made contingent on the availability of the needed human and material resources.

Finally, the Council has tried to ensure a smooth transition between peacekeeping, which clearly falls within its purview, and post-conflict peace-building, which draws on a variety of actors. In Guinea-Bissau, the Post-Conflict Peace-Building Support Office established last year has done an outstanding job. In February this year a successful peacekeeping operation — the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) — was replaced by the United Nations Peace-Building Support Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA). And in March, the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH) handed over to the International Civilian Support Mission in Haiti (MICAH), a peace-building operation established by the General Assembly. Such actions should continue, because it is essential for us not to lose the investment made by the United Nations in the peacekeeping phase, and for us to build on what has been achieved, so as not to fall back into a spiral of crisis and violence.

A third noteworthy development in the work of the Council relates to progress in the area of transparency; I am thinking here of comments made by two previous speakers. All the Presidents of the Security Council have sought, whenever possible and appropriate, to convene public meetings to hear briefings by the Secretariat or by Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. That establishes a new practice which France welcomes. I think we can go further in this area.

With respect to informal consultations, Council members have sought to improve the information that is provided in real time to non-members. That was certainly an abiding concern of the French presidency last June, as reflected in oral briefings and on our Internet site. I know that other Presidents have shared the same concern.

Having said that — and this will be my last comment — improvements are still desirable and possible. In the area of peacekeeping, I have described our hopes regarding the speedy implementation of the recommendations contained in the Brahimi report. The Security Council has a special responsibility with respect to mandates, which have to be clearly defined, credible, achievable and appropriate, and with respect to relations with the troop contributors.

Greater attention should be given to the regional dimension of conflicts, in particular in a preventive approach. The destabilizing effects of the conflict in Sierra Leone on Guinea are an example of this. In that same spirit, we must increase interaction between the Security Council and the regional organizations, for several reasons. First, these organizations have a vital role to play in the prevention and settlement of conflicts, as can be seen today with Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Sierra Leone conflict; and secondly, to see to it that in a peace agreement negotiated at the regional level, the United Nations is not be assigned tasks that are impossible to carry out.

These are the comments that the French delegation wished to make in this debate, which we consider useful and productive and which, we believe, makes clear the good working relationship between the Assembly and the Council.

Programme of work

The President: I should like to inform members that the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly will resume tomorrow, Wednesday, 18 October 2000, at 3 p.m. The list of speakers is now open. On Friday, 27 October 2000, at 10 a.m. there will be open-ended informal consultations of the plenary on agenda item 182, on follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Assembly, to be held in Conference Room 2.

The meeting rose at 6.45 p.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.36

General Assembly

Official Records

Fifty-fifth session

36th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 18 October 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 11

Report of the Security Council (A/55/2)

Mr. Moushoutas (Cyprus): The heavy demands on the Security Council to respond to conflicts, threats and breaches of the peace, are evident from the enormous work load carried out by the Council between 16 June 1999 and 15 June 2000. The record number of 144 formal meetings convened, the 194 informal consultations held, the 57 resolutions adopted and the over 85 reports considered, constitute the body of the annual report (A/55/2), which the Council, pursuant to Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, is submitting to the General Assembly, on whose behalf it acts. The very submission of the report, which is expected to contain substantive, analytical and material information on the work of the Council is itself evidence of its accountability to the general membership of the United Nations.

There is no doubt that the working methods of the Security Council have, in general, improved, although there is still room for further improvement. We welcome the inclusion again of the addendum to the report, the monthly assessments prepared by outgoing Presidents and the continuation of the daily briefings by the presidency, which are attended by a growing number of non-members of the Council.

The numbers show that, despite the decrease of closed-doors meetings, there are still far more of them than regular open formal meetings. Although there may be good reasons for these closed meetings to be called from time to time, by nature they lack openness and thus send a message of exclusion to the rest of the United Nations membership. No amount of briefings after the event can compensate for full transparency and the information received by witnessing the Council's open meetings.

Openness is of even more importance when peacekeeping operations are considered. The host country, whose consent is needed for the stationing of peacekeeping forces and which is therefore directly involved, and those participating as contributors or potential contributors to peacekeeping operations, have a right to be considered when these operations are discussed.

On the substantive side, the report demonstrates the broad spectrum of activities with which the Security Council is seized. Conflicts and crises in the world have not diminished. What is more, many long-standing problems — including our own — remain unresolved, due to lack of political will and the lack of action to implement the Council's mandatory resolutions and decisions. There should not be selectivity in the implementation of Security Council resolutions, for it shakes the faith of the general membership, especially that of the small States, in this main organ entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Council must be strong. It must be able to face the new challenges of the new century. To do so, it must be primarily representative, reflecting the realities

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of a changed world. Increasing its membership on the basis of the equitable geographical distribution of seats, for both permanent and non-permanent members, will give the Council more legitimacy and strengthen its effectiveness. Secondly, the availability of funds and personnel is a necessary prerequisite for a strong Security Council, so that, as the Secretary-General stated, those who place their faith in it are never let down.

Turning to some other parts of the report, we offer several observations. First, there should be more restraint on the part of the Security Council in considering issues which may fall within the domain of the General Assembly. The need for a good relationship and coordination between the responsibilities of these two main organs cannot be overemphasized.

Secondly, the Security Council must become more sensitive to the collateral humanitarian impact of sanctions. Sanctions cause economic loss and create problems for innocent populations and for the neighbouring countries that observe such sanctions. We agree that sanctions should be very sparingly used, and we see a need to review the whole sanctions regime.

Thirdly, we agree with India about the incorporation into the report of an assessment by the Security Council of the usefulness and helpfulness of its own actions.

Fourthly, we continue to favour the German proposal with regard to giving explanations to the General Assembly after the exercise of a veto.

Fifthly, except in extraordinary situations of urgency, decisions of the Council should be taken after the debate is completed, and not before. Such a sequence in the voting will contribute to strengthening the positive impressions of the Council within and outside the United Nations, erasing any possible impression that the Council's decisions are taken routinely.

Sixthly, we support greater collaboration between the United Nations and regional organizations, as long as this collaboration is based on the United Nations Charter and on the promotion of goals in line with its provisions.

Finally, no reform, whatever its nature, can be more effective and useful than the will of the Security Council to implement its own resolutions and decisions.

Representing a country whose problem has remained on the United Nations agenda for the past several years, long awaiting a just solution on the basis of resolutions of the Security Council, we express our appreciation to the members of the Council, and congratulate the five newly elected members — Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore — while pledging our cooperation and support.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): The President of the Security Council has given a clear summary of the issues that have been before the Council in the past year. I would like to focus for a moment on the continent on which the Council spends the greater proportion of its time and energy: Africa.

First, despite the attention which the Council is paying to Africa, we have to acknowledge the difficulty of achieving positive results on African issues. There are a number of reasons for this. Conflicts in Africa are rarely straightforward bilateral conflicts between States, demanding a classical peacekeeping response. Ethiopia/Eritrea is the only African conflict that fits that description. Elsewhere — for example, in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo — African conflicts have been characterized by a complex interlinkage of internal and external elements. This has required a much more sophisticated response from the United Nations system than in the past, and one in which the Security Council has to fit its decisions into a much broader international response.

Nowhere is it clearer than in Africa that peace and development go hand in hand, or, to put it more starkly, that conflict and poverty feed off each other. It is in this context that the United Kingdom warmly supports the thrust of the Brahimi report (A/55/305), because it supplements our overall approach to development and the eradication of poverty, which is our number one United Nations priority.

It is no coincidence that one of the most troubled countries in Africa, Sierra Leone, is by some measures the poorest country in the world. Leaving aside the physical devastation, the waste of manpower caused by war and the virtual collapse of a functioning State, civil conflict in Sierra Leone has diverted the country's greatest and natural resource — diamonds — into the

hands of the rebels. Diamonds, instead of fuelling Sierra Leone's development, are fuelling its continuing bitter conflicts. The same is true in Angola and, applied to other natural resources, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

As a consequence, the international community, including the United Nations, needs to develop a comprehensive approach to the problems of peace and development in the continent. In the jargon, we need our policy to be "joined up" — in other words, coordinated both within and between Governments and international institutions. Working with the United Nations, the United Kingdom is beginning to address this with a conflict prevention fund financed and run jointly by the Foreign Ministry, the Development Ministry and the Defence Ministry. The rationale is simple. There is no point in a development ministry pouring resources into a country ravaged by conflict unless the other deficiencies are also addressed. Similarly, it is important for those involved in the business of development to look ahead, to see potential conflicts and to think of ways to avert them or mitigate their effects. Otherwise, the fruits of years of hard work can be thrown away very quickly. We are bringing this "joined up" approach to our work at the United Nations. The Security Council, too, needs to operate within the wider United Nations context.

But this comprehensive approach to policy needs to go beyond the United Nations. The United Nations is in some ways a small player in the overall African picture. The resources it has to spend on aid do not match those of the bilateral donors or the international financial institutions. Improving dialogue and coordination within the United Nations system, and between the United Nations system and the international community more widely, will pay greater dividends in Africa than anywhere else.

The United Nations also needs to play its part on the wider issues that trouble Africa. The word that I hear most often spoken is "leadership". The continent has thrown up some of the great men and women of this generation: Nelson Mandela, Kofi Annan and Graça Machel are three names that spring immediately to mind. But the overall weakness of leadership in Africa, manifested in poorly performing institutions, corruption and mismanagement, cannot be ignored, not least because they are problems that Africans themselves most often cite as dragging the continent down. It is good that African leaders themselves are increasingly ready to wake up to these problems and work productively to remedy them. None of them will be solved overnight. But the United Nations has a definite role to play.

This is a difficult and sensitive agenda. What is particularly worrying is the way in which African problems, particularly in West Africa and the Great Lakes region, feed on each other. This is why United Nations engagement with regional organizations, such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) or the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), is crucial, and why those organizations must be ready to exert pressure on their own members to find peaceful solutions before neighbouring States are drawn in.

Those members who read the report of the Security Council mission to Sierra Leone last week will see that we have come up with one overriding and principal recommendation, which is that there should be a coordinated strategy for Sierra Leone that brings in the region. And it needs to bring in the region, because the international community cannot do on its own what needs to be done in Sierra Leone. That report is an example of what I am saying — that there has to be a deliberate attempt with regard to each of these problems to produce a coordinated strategy that everybody subscribes to, or the bits that we do not address will poison the bits that we do. I ask representatives to look at the Sierra Leone mission report in that light, because each conflict presents its own challenges. I have no doubt that but for the intensified engagement of the Security Council and the United Nations more generally the continent's problems would become more intractable.

Finally, a word on the working methods of the Security Council, and in particular their transparency. It has for some time been an important concern of the United Kingdom that the Council should carry out its work with the maximum amount of innovation and transparency, and in a way which enables its deliberations to take place in a public setting, wherever possible. We believe that during the course of the period of this report the Council has made significant strides forward.

On 30 December 1999, in my capacity as President of the Council that month, I issued a note (S/1999/1291), setting out a number of points to improve procedural practice. I believe this note has

genuinely been put into effect under subsequent presidencies. Matters concerning the Middle East and the Balkans, African subjects, such as Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and East Timor have been the subject of briefings and debates in public meetings in the Council Chamber, with the wider membership in attendance, when previously many of the events might have been held in informal consultations. The balance between public meetings and informal consultations may still not be quite right, and there is further work to be done on matters relating to participation. But the work of the Council has now become significantly more accessible to non-members, without any diminution of its ability to take effective action.

The Council has, during the reporting period, been prepared to contemplate imaginative procedural innovations when the occasion requires, reviving the practice of private Council meetings, for instance. The Council has also shown that it can use new formats to take its work forward. An example is the ambassador-level meeting between Council members and troop contributors which took place in preparation for the Sierra Leone mission last week.

I hope that the Council will continue this welcome trend towards openness and that it will be prepared to try procedural innovations when necessary in the course of the coming year. In response, it would be good to see the wider membership using the greater opportunities for addressing the Council to debate points more spontaneously and reactively. Both within the Council and outside it, we are making too many set speeches which pass each other by. No Council can produce results unless we all listen, as well as transmit. The United Kingdom will continue to encourage an evolution in this respect.

Mr. Amer (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): This discussion of the annual report of the Security Council offers us a good opportunity to address a number of issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security, the principal raison d'être of the United Nations. My delegation listened to the statement of Mr. Andjaba, the President of the Council for this month, who submitted this year's report.

The report of the Security Council before us today makes it clear that the world remains beset by many problems. The period under consideration in the report witnessed the continuation of old conflicts and the eruption of new ones, which confirms yet again that the international community remains unable to establish solid foundations for a world that enjoys comprehensive security. In following the efforts of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, my delegation remains fully confident that its role in putting an end to the acts of violence, conflict and widespread devastation prevailing in many countries would achieve more positive results if the Council cooperated with the other bodies of the United Nations.

Most important is cooperation with the General Assembly, which the Charter entrusts with consideration of the general underlying principles that strengthen international peace and security. Current events clearly demonstrate that the General Assembly is not given the opportunity to assume its responsibilities in this area when the Security Council finds itself incapable of confronting threats to international peace and security. If the Council were to cooperate with the Assembly in these cases, in accordance with relevant principles of the Charter, it would be able to defuse many crises and find solutions to numerous problems and disputes, thus avoiding consequent tragedies and devastation.

My delegation has noticed that some improvements have been made to the working methods of the Security Council. The practice of holding consultations with countries that contribute troops to peacekeeping operations, of informing the Chairmen of the geographical Groups of the Council's programme of work, and of issuing the monthly assessment has been incorporated into the Council's annual report. All these improvements, however, should prompt us to ask for more so that we may achieve full transparency and clarity in the Council's work and activities.

The introduction of the Council's report states that Council members held 194 closed consultations of the whole during the year under review. It also cites the number of statements the Council has issued and the number of reports by the Secretary-General it has considered. We have noted a decrease in the number of informal sessions by comparison with previous years, but we are seriously concerned that the report includes no substantive information on what occurred in these consultations. We call for a radical improvement of this section of the Council's report so as to ensure that it reflects comprehensively the statements made by

Council members in these informal consultations, since the non-member States of the Council are interested not in the number of hours of consultations held, but in what occurred during these consultations.

In previous sessions, we concluded our discussion of the annual report of the Security Council by noting the report's contents. My delegation and, I believe, many others share the opinion that the General Assembly should not be satisfied merely with taking note of very important issues. We feel that the General Assembly and its member States should clearly state their views on the contents of the report and present specific recommendations to the Council, in accordance with the relevant Articles of the Charter — Articles 10 and 11 in particular — if we wish to attach due importance to this debate and to demonstrate our willingness to promote the Assembly's work towards creating a stable and secure world.

African issues have monopolized a large portion of the Council's work. This has coincided with African activities that have had very important and tangible results. The Lusaka Agreement has been activated to address the dispute in the Great Lakes region. Agreements have been reached on the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the national reconciliation efforts in Burundi and the mediation efforts in Somalia, where a President and a Parliament have been elected. We believe that Africa needs more support to promote the solutions we have found and to find solutions to the other conflicts. This will require greater support for African mechanisms to prevent conflict and promote stability.

Development is the other face of peace. Africa needs development assistance in order to establish a comprehensive strategy to eradicate poverty and disease. International solidarity must become tangible. The African continent should be integrated into the world economy in order to be able to export its goods to the developed countries, to end the coercive economic measures imposed on some of its countries and to take concrete action to address its foreign debts. It is not enough for some countries to cancel some of the debts of the least developed countries; Africa's entire foreign debt must be cancelled. That is what Africa requires, particularly from those who colonized it and plundered its natural resources. These needs are extremely important if we genuinely wish to assist Africa to achieve development and consolidate peace and stability.

As reflected in chapter 6 of the report under consideration, in July 1999 the Security Council discussed developments concerning the Lockerbie incident, including lifting the sanctions imposed on my countries in accordance with Security Council resolutions 748 (1992) and 883 (1993). According to the assessment of this month's President of the Council, the representative of Malaysia:

> "During the discussion that followed, it was clear that there was no consensus on the question of the lifting of the sanctions. One permanent member was of the view that not all of the conditions had been met by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya; it was quite prepared to exercise its use of the veto should a resolution be tabled proposing that the sanctions be lifted at this stage." (*A/55/2, p. 445*)

Further along, the assessment notes that

> "Others ... underlined the need for members of the Council not to politicize the matter, as the Scottish court was already handling it." (ibid.)

More than a year has passed since the rejection of the draft proposal, put forward by the Security Council group of members of the Non-Aligned Movement, for the removal of sanctions against the Libyan people. Regrettably, the United States, which objected to it, continues to prevent the Security Council from adopting such a resolution under the oft-repeated pretexts that Libya supports international terrorism and that it must cooperate with the Scottish court trying the two Libyan nationals accused. My country has repeatedly condemned international terrorism and has supported all international efforts to halt it. We are cooperating fully with the Scottish court.

I wish, however, to focus on one of the strangest pretexts put forward: the payment of compensation to the families of the victims of Pan Am flight 103. How can the United States ask for compensation while the matter remains in court? Does this not make a mockery of the legal principle involved? Does this not imply a premature assumption of the court's decision? Ascertaining guilt or innocence is a prerogative of the court. Should not Libya be the one to receive compensation, since the sanctions imposed against it have cost it more than $30 billion?

The fact that my country has complied with all the resolutions of the Security Council was confirmed

in the report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council in July 1999. The report showed that Libya has fulfilled all its obligations and that the Council should lift the sanctions imposed on it. This conclusion in the report of the Secretary-General was reaffirmed by resolutions of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Summit, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Islamic Conference, the Arab League and finally the Group of 77 summit held last April. It was also reaffirmed by the five-member committee of the OAU, the Committee of Six of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Committee of Seven established by the Arab League, in their respective letters to the President of the Security Council, documents S/2000/881, S/2000/906 and S/2000/864.

The lifting of sanctions has been delayed. The Security Council should take responsibility and implement the will of the international community, which calls upon it to lift the sanctions against the Libyan people. Fulfilling its own resolutions is the only procedure that would restore its credibility. Any delay means that the Security Council works not in accordance with the views of the majority of the international community, but according to the will of one country. The will of one country could not represent the will of the whole international community.

Mr. Mra (Myanmar): At the outset, I express our gratitude to the Permanent Representative of Namibia, President of the Security Council for the present month, for his presentation of the report of the Security Council. Serving as the current most effective tool to inform the general membership of the Organization of the important work of the Council in the past year, the report constitutes the upholding of the principle of accountability and offers a regular opportunity to non-members of the Security Council to reflect on the work of the Council and on how to further enhance its effectiveness and efficiency.

With respect to the technical aspect of the report, we are pleased to note that it continues to cover the work of the subsidiary organs and to include the annual reports of the sanctions Committees and the statements to the press made by the Presidents following consultations of the whole. We also commend the Presidents of the Council for providing us with their assessment of the work of the Council during their respective presidencies. These positive practices are useful steps in making the work of the Council more transparent.

The situations the Council had to address over the past year were very complex and diverse. They have demonstrated how difficult it is in some situations to achieve sustainable peace and security, and how great the demands are on the collective security system which was established over 50 years ago in circumstances which were a far cry from today's. Despite the experience of over 50 years, there still are many lessons for the Council to learn from the crises it has had to respond to. These lessons tell us that meticulous preparations that envisage all conceivable contingencies are needed, and that full coordination and cooperation with all the actors are vitally important. Even then, as experience has vividly shown, any mission can go awry due to various factors resulting in losses in both human and financial terms. To prevent such losses is, as the Secretary-General stated in paragraph 40 of his report on the work of the Organization (A/55/1), to shift from a culture of reaction to one of prevention. Given the most lethal crises the Council has been seized with over the past year, we wonder how the Council can establish sustainable peace and security without changing the usual reactive approach.

In this regard, we are much encouraged to note that measures have been taken to strengthen early warning and conflict prevention capacities at the United Nations and to enhance coordination with others. We hold the view that these capacities must also include the ability to show high sensitivity to early warning signals of an evolving situation so that unnecessary loss of lives will not be repeated. We firmly believe that the new culture of prevention will go a long way in helping the Security Council fulfil its primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. We also share the view that the Secretary-General should be authorized with funds to start planning before a mission is approved by the Security Council. This will certainly help accelerate the deployment process that will in turn prevent a situation from escalating into a crisis.

Effective peacekeeping operations remain essential for the maintenance of international peace and security. However, these operations have, as recognized by all, become more complicated, and have been charged with an expanded range of tasks, thus becoming more demanding on the finite resource

capacities of our Organization. We are distressed to learn that occasionally these operations have had to be carried out in precarious environments, putting at risk not only the success of the mission but also the personal security of the peacekeepers. It is unacceptable that our "peace crusaders" are being thus threatened. The situations over the past year clearly demonstrate the importance of taking measures to train and equip our peacekeepers adequately so that they can work with confidence and a greater sense of security.

I take this opportunity to express our support for the view that United Nations peacekeeping operations need credible deterrent capacity, with what the Secretary-General calls, in paragraph 70 of his report, "robust rules of engagement" explicitly spelled out. Only then will our peacekeepers be able to determine when to intervene between warring parties or competing forces and when not to intervene. The credibility of our Organization is too valuable to be impaired again, as in the past, due to weaknesses in the mandates we establish.

I now turn to two issues of immediate concern to us: small arms and HIV/AIDS. These issues have in their own way been contributing factors to undermining our efforts to maintain international peace and security. While small arms, with their easy availability, have been the weapons mostly and frequently used in armed conflicts, AIDS, with its high prevalence rate, has been the most destructive disease. These two issues cry out for a coherent and coordinated approach by the international community. Unless we address them effectively and as a matter of priority, they are bound to have devastating consequences for the socio-economic development of countries, especially developing countries. Therefore, we are greatly heartened that the Security Council addressed these two issues, among others, in its open thematic debates.

The magnitude of these two problems and the urgent need to resolve them is reflected by the consensus we have reached on the convening of a special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS and an international conference on small arms, both in 2001. We hope that, through them, we will be able to work out well-coordinated plans to combat these two evils that kill most people with equal vengeance.

Concerning the thematic debate, my delegation wishes to reiterate its position. While we appreciate the value of these debates, we are concerned that over time they would insidiously allow the Council to move into areas that fall within the purview of other forums in the United Nations system. This would amount to an encroachment on their mandates. We are convinced that these debates will be confined to only those aspects that bear on the maintenance of international peace and security.

As the Secretary-General stated in his report on the work of the Organization, sustainable peace and security for all countries and peoples remains a central objective of the United Nations at the dawn of the twenty-first century. The achievement of this objective is wholly the task of the Security Council, the unique organ in the United Nations system entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It is a trust on the strength of which we, Members of the Organization, especially the small and the weak, mortgage our sense of security. It would be highly paradoxical if this trust were exploited in ways that undermined our sense of security.

Although it is in the mandate of the Security Council to determine whether a given situation is a real threat to international peace and security, it is a mandate given to the Council as a whole, and not to individual members. It is the entire membership of the Council that must concur in a determination of a particular situation's threat to peace and security, for it is the Council that represents the interest of the entire membership of the Organization in matters of international peace and security, not only one member or any group of countries.

As the work of the Security Council over the past year has shown, there are serious situations that require an immediate response from the Council. All the membership of the Organization fully appreciates and supports the Council when it responds to such situations as expected of it because they are genuine threats to peace and security. However, to involve the Council in matters that clearly fall within domestic jurisdiction on grounds of perceived potential threat to peace and security is highly questionable and open to serious doubt about the real motive behind such an attempt. Coming from an organ like the Security Council, such attempts are bound to adversely affect the credibility of the Council, which we are making collective efforts to enhance in the ongoing process of United Nations reform.

Myanmar, like other Members of the Organization, attaches great importance to the work of the Council, and we fully trust that the Council will continue to be capable of delivering what is expected of it by the international community, as it has done over half a century. To enable it to do so, it is important to reserve our attention and resources for where they are really needed, rather than to squander them on situations which do not present a real threat.

Before concluding, I wish to make a few comments on an area which has assumed more importance over the past several years — cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and other actors. Given a shift in the nature of the threat to peace and security, there is an obvious need to enlist cooperation with regional organizations and other relevant actors in dealing with very complex situations. Depending on the complexity of a situation, relationships between the United Nations and a regional organization may vary from time to time and from region to region. As evidenced by the events of the past year, some crisis situations needed the assistance of relevant regional organizations, and cooperation with regional organizations and other actors proved very useful and beneficial.

However, cooperation with regional organizations usually involves extremely sensitive areas, in addition to normal organizational problems. As a result, such an undertaking may not always be smooth. Fortunately, the Charter of the United Nations has clearly spelled out the ground rules governing the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations and the primary role of the United Nations. Without wishing to denigrate the important role of regional organizations, I wish to stress that any consideration of the involvement of a regional organization must be strictly based on the relevant provisions of the Charter.

Finally, I wish to state that the consistent support of the international community is vital for the success of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. A decision of the Council must be seen as legitimate by the international community to enable it to support the work of the Council consistently. The report before us serves, to some extent, the purpose of enhancing our understanding of the work of the Council and the legitimacy of its decisions as well. This is positive indeed.

I also take this opportunity to convey our congratulations to Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore on their election to the Security Council as non-permanent members. My delegation wishes them every success in their important endeavours as members of the Security Council.

Mr. Sun (Republic of Korea): I begin by thanking the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Martin Andjaba, for his comprehensive presentation of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. My delegation also appreciates the exceptional effort made by the Secretariat to provide such a thorough and lengthy document on time this year, when the Millennium Summit might have delayed its release. We would also like to express our appreciation to the Security Council for all its hard work over the document's reporting period to maintain international peace and security in various crises and conflict situations.

The report of the Security Council is an important tool for ensuring coordination between the General Assembly and the Security Council, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter — in particular, Articles 24 and 15. In this regard, we find this year's report to be highly informative and relevant.

We would first like to note the general issues relating to sanctions. This subject will become increasingly important in the coming years, as smart sanctions are being developed to enhance the effectiveness of United Nations sanctions. Sanctions can cause unnecessary suffering, not only for their intended targets, but also for innocent civilians in neighbouring countries. For this reason, we believe that we should improve the current system of United Nations sanctions.

Secondly, we would like to point to the issue of protection of United Nations personnel in the field. Since the introduction of this urgent issue by the Republic of Korea during its presidency of the Security Council in May 1997, a number of important follow-up measures have been taken. The recent increases in deliberate attacks on United Nations personnel are deplorable. We believe that all peacekeeping missions should be given sufficient mandates and ample resources to guarantee their safety, as well as their success.

In this regard, my delegation joins many others in welcoming the Brahimi report (A/55/305) as the basis

for discussion of new methods to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations peacekeeping operations. The report includes many valid recommendations. However, we believe that the financial burden of implementing these recommendations should be shared in a balanced way when they require new or increased budgets.

My third point relates to the reform of the Security Council. In order to deal effectively with the daunting challenges of the new millennium, the Republic of Korea believes that the Security Council must be reformed in ways that will strengthen its representativeness, transparency and effectiveness. The Open-ended Working Group's discussions of the question of equitable representation on an increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters have not yet produced an end result. However, the Group is making progress, and I hope it will be able to maintain its momentum for exploring creative ways to work out a formula that will satisfy most of the Member States. The Group's goal is to make the views of Member States, particularly the view of those that are capable and willing to contribute to the purposes of the United Nations, systematically reflected in the decision-making process on important security issues. My Mission will continue to actively participate in the deliberations of the Working Group in the future.

As my final point, I would like to touch upon three aspects of the Security Council's proceedings. But first my delegation would like to emphasize the importance of allowing troop-contributing countries to participate appropriately in the decision-making process of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Secondly, we hope that the Security Council's public meetings will become more frequent in order to increase the Council's transparency and keep non-members better informed. Finally, we would like to point to the importance of the briefings by the President of the Security Council to non-members, especially after informal consultations. Whether such briefings are delivered by a member of the President's Mission or on the Mission's web site, they need to be implemented with continuity and in a timely manner in order to ensure their usefulness for non-member States that closely follow Security Council issues.

Yesterday the General Assembly adopted the item entitled "Peace, security and reunification on the Korean peninsula" as an additional item on the agenda of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly. I would like to thank the President for this adoption, as well as the forty-seven other Missions that join us in the request for its inclusion.

I would like to close by congratulating the newly elected members of the Council: Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore. My delegation wishes them every success in their new responsibilities. We look forward to working with them in the coming year.

Mr. Enkhsaikhan (Mongolia): My delegation would like to join the preceding speakers in thanking the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Andjaba of Namibia, for his lucid introduction of the Council's annual report to this Assembly.

Consideration of the report of the Council (A/55/2), pursuant to Article 15 and Article 24 of the Charter, provides us with the opportunity to reflect on the work of the United Nations principle body charged with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. This discussion is important both in terms of making constructive recommendations for further improvement of the Council's work, as well as for coordinating activities between this Assembly and the Council. With respect to the latter, yesterday and this morning many interesting and practical proposals have been made which, if implemented, could contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of this principle organ of the United Nations.

Speaking of the proposals made in the past in the General Assembly on enhancing the effectiveness of the Council, my delegation wonders if or in what setting or format the Council considers them and whether this Assembly could have some feedback on the multitude of proposals made so far. As is evident from the report, the Council has constantly been seized with many crisis situations that have called for prompt attention and action. We welcome the Council's responses to these situations. However, some crisis situations, such as we are witnessing now in the Middle East, are not on its immediate agenda, which raises questions about selectivity of approaches to some difficult crisis situations.

My delegation fully appreciates ongoing efforts to enhance the Council's effectiveness and to assure greater participation by the non-member States of the Council in its work through organizing open, thematic debates and discussions on such issues as the

protection of civilians in armed conflict, protection for humanitarian assistance to refugees, the plight of children in armed conflict, and so forth.

The report before us contains an impressive record of the Council's activities during the period under consideration. Furthermore, the brief description of informal consultations of the whole, of the monthly assessments of the Council presidents, as well as information on the work of some of its subsidiary bodies, are well documented in the report. My delegation wishes to emphasize its support for the current attempts to introduce more transparency to the Council's activities. However, concerning the report's format, we would like to reiterate, as we did last year, that the Council should strive to make it more analytical, rather than present it mainly as a compilation of adopted, and to many of us very familiar, documents.

Mr. Lelong (Haiti), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We agree that the current international situation requires a comprehensive approach to maintaining international peace and security. In that respect, we recognize that in recent years the Security Council has made concrete efforts to focus on specific questions with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security. I would like to stress in particular the time and attention the Council has dedicated to the African continent — not only to its ongoing armed conflicts, but also to the acute economic and social problems there and to the devastating impact of AIDS on many African countries.

Peacekeeping was another area on which the Council focused its attention. During the last several years the Council has made important efforts in this field. My delegation would like to underline the fact that the Organization's role in the area of peacekeeping must be further increased and improved in the foreseeable future. The lessons of Srebrenica, Rwanda and Sierra Leone have made it abundantly clear that a thorough and critical review is needed to make peacekeeping operations succeed in meeting our commitment under the Charter.

Like others who are deeply indebted to the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, which is chaired by Ambassador Brahimi and whose report (A/55/305) presented a frank analysis of the prevailing situation and forthright recommendations for change, we believe that the Panel's report deserves serious consideration and prompt action. My delegation views the Council's organization of informal consultations with the participation of troop-contributing countries as an important initiative that could be useful for finding more practical and adequate ways to increase the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations.

Like many previous speakers, we believe that the question of humanitarian intervention should be approached with the utmost caution. We believe that, although the principle of State sovereignty should not shield massive and gross violations of basic human rights, it should also not be ignored by the Council or by any of its members.

As we are considering the Council's annual report, we have to focus on its reform process — or, rather, the lack of it — as well. The efforts made so far to reform the Council have not brought us closer to resolving some of the fundamental issues on the agenda of the Open-ended Working Group. There is a great demand, and indeed a need, for speeding up the reform of the Council. Like many others, we also continue to believe that the expansion of the Council should take place in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. In the former category — along with the major industrialized Powers — representatives of developing countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America should be represented on the Council. A reasonable increase in non-permanent seats should reflect the representative character of the Council and enable a growing number of Member States to contribute to its work. An essential part of the reform process should be to deal with the power of the veto, whose use should be considerably curtailed.

My delegation shares the view that the sanctions imposed by the Security Council, as provided for in Article 41 of the Charter, must be resorted to as an extreme measure. We believe that such an enforcement mechanism should be reconsidered as soon as its target or primary objective is realized. My delegation believes that everything must done by the international community to protect civilian populations from the devastating impact of sanctions. In this respect, we fully associate ourselves with the concrete suggestions made earlier in this debate by many delegations.

In conclusion, allow me to assure the President that the Mongolian delegation will fully cooperate with him and with Member States in our common efforts to

increase the role and efficiency of our Organization — and especially that of its two main organs, the General Assembly and the Security Council — at the dawn of this century.

Mr. Dos Santos (Angola): The Angolan delegation takes this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Andjaba of Namibia on his presentation of the annual report of the Security Council. I also join others in welcoming the report, which shows us part of the work done by the Security Council from June 1999 to June 2000, in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Taking into account the primary task of the Security Council, which is to maintain international peace and security, I would like to express our sincere appreciation for the role played by the Council in the prevention of international wars and conflicts. However, allow me to make some remarks in this regard.

Although efforts have been made by the Council to maintain peace and security, in my delegation's view it has to seek a more effective war-prevention mechanism in order to avoid so many armed conflicts — in particular in Africa, where conflicts have become ever more deadly and devastating.

We cannot ignore the role played by the Security Council in the settlement of crises and conflicts, but it is necessary to reinforce the role of the Council and the roles of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General so that they may fulfil their mandate. In order to achieve peace and security, the Council must also strengthen further its relationship with regional organizations, such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), so that it may, through them, more effectively provide a forum for the settlement of conflicts and disputes and be able to deal with armed conflicts more decisively.

With regard to Angola, I acknowledge the efforts made by the Security Council to find peace and stability, especially with its adoption of resolution 1295 (2000). However, I am convinced that the Council can do more by continuing to require States, private organizations and others to implement its sanctions. The Security Council has to further reinforce its action — as it has already done in some areas of the world — especially with regard to respect for its resolutions and to having every Member State follow up on those resolutions. This is an obligation under Article 25 of the Charter.

It is time to live in peace and to rebuild the destroyed economy of Angola, and to provide the people with all that they need.

Finally, with a view to strengthening the role of the United Nations, including the Security Council, I would like to emphasize the role that can be played by the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, by the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council and by the report (A/55/305) of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi. We should welcome all proposals and suggestions on this matter. I am sure that the present report of the Security Council is a document to reflect upon as we work towards peace and security.

Mr. Heinbecker (Canada) (*spoke in French*): When Canada ran for election to the Security Council, we promised that we would promote human security, strive for a more transparent Council and work towards a more effective and credible Council. In the intervening months we have worked hard to deliver on those commitments, and it is time for us to take stock.

Canada has worked hard to help adapt the Council's mandate and its working methods to the security and political realities of our day. We have sought to expand the traditional definition of security to include human security. The overwhelmingly civilian toll of modern conflict makes this not only a practical necessity but a moral imperative.

(*spoke in English*)

We have made some progress towards such a broader definition. Canada has consistently argued that the Security Council must give greater weight to human rights and humanitarian principles in deciding when to act. To that end, we promoted the protection of civilians in armed conflict as the major theme of our Council membership. The protection of civilians now figures more and more both in the Council's discourse and in the actions it takes. The Council must ensure, however, that its engagement on these issues is not just rhetorical, but substantive and action-oriented.

Kosovo was a hard lesson on the changed nature of security and the response it demands. That demand was faced again with the civilian suffering in East Timor. Each experience must lead us towards a more consistent approach to addressing new forms of conflict, particularly those marked by gross violations of human rights or massive human suffering. In the global age, mass victimization and abuse of people are not tolerable. State sovereignty cannot be a shield behind which such acts are perpetrated with impunity. There must be accountability, or there will be no stability.

In addition to addressing fundamental questions of the Council's mandate, Canada has supported efforts to reform the Council's basic instruments for promoting peace, namely peacekeeping and sanctions. We remain concerned that mandates are not always equal to the realities on the ground, and that the resources provided to achieve those mandates are not always adequate. Too often, peacekeeping operations are unduly influenced by political considerations or financial considerations rather than by operational necessities. There are serious capacity problems within the Secretariat that must also be addressed.

We therefore welcome the report (A/55/305) of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, which tackles these issues directly, with practical and practicable recommendations. We are pleased that the Security Council is now actively following up on the report, and we will do our part, both on and off the Council, to see that the Brahimi recommendations are implemented.

We are encouraged by recent steps to improve the instrument of sanctions. In Angola, the Council has launched an unprecedented effort to make the sanctions against UNITA work. I am happy to take this opportunity to applaud the work of my predecessor, Bob Fowler, a friend of many in this Hall and, more important, a friend of the United Nations. He succeeded in showing that the United Nations means business when it imposes sanctions and that sanctions can have beneficial effects on the people in the targeted countries. I have no doubt, having just returned from Angola, that the work Bob Fowler has done has had very beneficial effects for the people of Angola.

The new monitoring mechanism to promote compliance with the sanctions against UNITA provides a model that should be applied to other sanctions regimes to make them more credible and more effective. In Angola, we have seen how the identification of sanctions-busters — the naming and shaming of people who have flouted the will of the international community as expressed in the United Nations — can lead to tighter and better implementation of sanctions. We hope the Council will continue to build on that precedent. Canada has also been pleased to play a leading role in efforts to sharpen what has historically been one of the Council's blunter instruments.

We also welcome recent debates in the Council that have contributed to creating a culture of prevention. The risks and costs, both human and financial, of reacting to conflict once it has broken out must lead us to focus more sharply on prevention. But when our best efforts fail, the international community will be confronted again with the question of whether and how to step in to end and resolve conflict. This dilemma becomes more acute in the case of intra-State conflicts, particularly those involving human rights abuses or humanitarian emergencies.

To help advance the debate on these questions, Canada has spearheaded the launch of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, the results of whose work will be made available to the General Assembly a year from now. Speaking here last month as Foreign Minister, Mr. Lloyd Axworthy expressed the hope that the Commission would defuse the concerns that surround the issues of intervention and sovereignty — which we understand — and help the international community grapple with this key security challenge of our day. As the Brundtland Commission did for economic development and environmental protection, we hope the new Commission will take two policy objectives considered by some to be incompatible, sovereignty and intervention, and produce a synthesis that we can all work with. We expect that the Commission's findings will be of benefit to the Security Council and, in fact, to the United Nations membership as a whole, in the fulfilment of the Organization's global security mandate.

A word on Security Council reform.

The global trend towards greater openness and democracy must be reflected in the Security Council. The legitimacy of its decisions hinges more and more on the way those decisions are reached and on the

voices that are heard in the making of those decisions. Canada firmly believes that any expansion of the Council should be in the non-permanent category only. While the Council needs to mirror United Nations membership better, it is equally important that Security Council members be democratically elected and accountable to the membership as a whole, not merely to their own capitals. More vetoes would only give the Council political sclerosis.

As for methods of work, the credibility of the Council and the action it mandates can only benefit from greater interaction with, and inclusion of, those who must ultimately give effect to its decisions. Since Canada joined the Council, we have seen positive steps towards more inclusive and flexible meeting formats and more thematic debates involving the wider United Nations membership. There have been inroads made into the Council's traditionally secretive mode of operation. These gains must be carefully guarded and continually built upon by other reform-minded Council members. We strongly support, for example, meetings with troop-contributing countries whenever mandates are being drafted or revised. We also believe the Council should have available to it the best possible military advice and briefing before making peace operation decisions.

The Council also needs to benefit more from interaction with regional organizations. Increased coordination and communication are required to ensure that regional efforts can get the backing they need from the Council. There is a particularly promising opportunity, which we discovered during our trip to West Africa last week, to work cooperatively with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). We should help strengthen that organization strengthen itself so that it can cooperate better with us.

The sheer volume of the Security Council's report to the Assembly reflects the reality of a heavy global security agenda and an increasingly busy Council. During our time on the Council, we have seen it become more deeply engaged in today's security challenges, and that is only to be applauded. Canada supported, and continues to support, the sending of Council delegations to trouble spots, and has participated in some of them, most recently to Sierra Leone, in West Africa. That was a most timely initiative and can only benefit the Council and the Organization as a whole when it makes some of the more difficult decisions it is going to have to make in the coming days. We welcome such activism, and we commend it to others.

(*spoke in French*)

We believe it is fair to say that there is now greater convergence in the Council around common goals. The Council is increasingly united on which issues require its engagement and how that engagement can be most constructive. In Sierra Leone, there is a growing unity of purpose that can be harnessed to address in a resolute way the conflict and its regional dimensions.

It was quite fitting that the first session of the General Assembly of this millennium should have been launched by a Summit of the world's leaders. That Summit resulted in a renewed commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations and a determination to adapt the Organization to the challenges of the new century. That same pledge was made by the leaders during the Security Council Summit. While many of the overarching issues of peace and security of the cold-war era have receded, the advent of new forms of conflict and human misery pose new challenges not only to world peace, but to our humanity.

When we ran for election two years ago, we asked for the Assembly's trust. We hope it will agree that we have done our best to merit it.

(*spoke in English*)

We congratulate the five countries elected to serve on the Council in 2001 and 2002 — Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore. We wish them and the 10 continuing members of the Council every success in making the Security Council a still more effective and more transparent instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security, including the security of people.

Mr. Powles (New Zealand): I would like to note that for a number of years New Zealand has been fortunate to have had a close working relationship with the delegation of Argentina on the working methods of the Security Council, particularly on issues relating to transparency. That delegation has informed me that it is happy to continue that relationship and that it wishes to be associated with this statement.

I would also like join with others in expressing our appreciation to the Permanent Representative of Namibia, Ambassador Andjaba, for his presentation of the report contained in document A/55/2.

The report continues the trend towards greater comprehensiveness. This too we welcome. We particularly appreciate the clear organization of the contents of the report, which allows for ease of reference by topic, chronology or theme.

The period under review has been a very busy and productive one for the Council. We applaud, for example, the initiatives it has undertaken, including the dispatch of missions to East Timor and Indonesia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Kosovo, and most recently, of course, to West Africa. In this regard we would emphasize the importance of the Security Council mission scheduled to go again to Indonesia next month, as has been agreed with that country, given the continuing security problems in West Timor. We also greatly welcome the establishment by the Council over the past year of working groups to review or make recommendations upon thematic issues of particular importance, including the protection of civilians in armed conflict and improving the effectiveness of United Nations sanctions.

We are very pleased to observe that there have also been significant strides made over the past year towards enhancing the Council's working methods, thereby allowing Member States that are non-members of the Council some of the rights afforded them in the Charter.

I refer in particular to the note by the President of the Council (S/1999/1291) issued one day before the eve of the new millennium, and for which Ambassador Greenstock acknowledged paternity in his statement earlier this morning. The note includes several measures designed to enhance the access of non-members to information and to participation in Council meetings. The fact that the note begins by recalling a presidential statement of December 1994 — when New Zealand and Argentina were last serving together on the Council — which contemplates an increased recourse to open meetings, is rather poignant. But then, what is six years in the scheme of things?

As the Assembly knows, the measures unveiled at the end of December last year include: making available draft resolutions and presidential statements to non-members as soon as they are introduced to informal consultations of the whole; improving the quality of presidential briefings to non-members; distributing briefing notes on field operations to non-members in a timely manner; and the stipulation of a range of meeting options whose formats provide for greater participation by non-members.

I would also like to mention the note by the President of the Council (S/2000/155), issued on 28 February during the Argentine presidency. This note formalizes a proposal, put forward by this delegation, that newly elected members of the Council be invited to observe the Council's informal consultations for a period of one month immediately preceding their term of membership. This proposal will provide for more transparency and allow new members to acquaint themselves in advance with the customary procedures and practice of Council members at these informal meetings.

These steps towards increased transparency, even if slow in coming and representing a delicate compromise, are nevertheless very welcome. My delegation, no doubt like many others, especially values the opportunity to attend briefings of the Council by senior Secretariat officials on items of importance to us, particularly in cases where we are contributing troops. In our view, the measures regarding the participation of non-members in Council meetings should be incorporated into the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, which in turn should be reviewed and finalized.

Nevertheless, despite this progress, implementation of the new procedures has at times seemed incomplete and uncertain. In addition, the undue preponderance of informal consultations of the whole, as compared with formal meetings, continued to be a feature of the Council's conduct of its business throughout the period under review. We accept that such consultations can have their uses, but these should not include closing off the real business of the Organization to the public. Rule 48 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure states that "Unless it decides otherwise, the Security Council shall meet in public". In the view of our delegations, this rule makes it very clear that the Council should, as a general rule, meet in public. Only under exceptional circumstances should it meet in private or, indeed, in informal consultations. This year's report, however, suggests that over 60 per cent of the Council's business was conducted in informal sessions.

We would also remind the Secretariat that the Security Council comprises 15 members and that its practice of sometimes consulting on certain issues with the five permanent members only must stop.

The improvements in transparency that I have touched on have not come about easily. We thank those members of the Council that have successfully promoted change over the past year. We wish the new elected members — Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore — every success in the continuing effort to make the Council more democratic and accountable. We also pay tribute to the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform, which has worked tirelessly to bring issues of transparency to the fore. We would reiterate that the Open-ended Working Group continues to be the appropriate forum in which to pursue reform of the Security Council. If, as one delegation suggested yesterday, there is indeed a minority holding reform hostage, then clearly it is the five permanent members on the question of the veto. In this regard, the Permanent Representative of Canada earlier referred to the problem of sclerosis in the Council.

Finally, we look forward to the implementation of many of the improvements suggested in the Brahimi report and we are pleased that the Council has established a working group on this important subject. The implementation of the recommendation in paragraph 64 (d) of the report that countries that have committed military units to an operation should have access to Secretariat briefings to the Council on matters affecting the safety and security of their personnel is of particular importance to us. We recall that our delegations were at the forefront of efforts in 1994 to establish the practice of regular consultations with troop contributors.

The influence brought to bear by some members of the Council and by the General Assembly has achieved results. We are all aware of the heavy responsibilities of the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security, and we have recently been reminded by our leaders of the central position of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations. We are confident that under our President's guidance further progress will be made in improving the relationship between the Security Council and the wider membership, particularly the General Assembly, which is so critical to the overall health of the Organization.

Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, I should like to associate myself with previous speakers in thanking the President of the Security Council, the Permanent Representative of Namibia, Ambassador Martin Andjaba, for his introduction of the report of the Security Council. We attach the greatest importance to consideration of this question, as the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, has the major responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The report paints an impressive picture of the serious efforts of the Council to respond to critical situations that have emerged in various parts of the world and have represented a threat to peace. The figures relating to the number of formal meetings, informal consultations, resolutions adopted and presidential statements issued not only bear witness to the ever-increasing volume of work that the Security Council is now carrying out under an extraordinarily heavy schedule, but also attest to the growing expectations of the international community regarding the Council's responses to conflicts emerging throughout the world.

The situation in the Balkans, Abkhazia, Georgia, the Middle East, East Timor and Cyprus, on the African continent, and in Afghanistan are only some of the urgent issues on today's political map that remain the focus of the Council's attention.

We cannot fail to note that during the period covered by the report, the Security Council significantly expanded its agenda, and is now dealing with such pressing and drastic problems of our time as the protection of civilians in armed conflict, the spread of light weapons and the threat of the large-scale spread of AIDS, among other issues. We believe it to be significant that the subjects taken up by the Council for discussion have not only reverberated widely throughout the world but — and this is particularly important — have promoted the adoption of new, consolidated approaches and in search for answers to contemporary challenges. Unfortunately, during this period there was no decline in conflicts throughout the world. The number of problems that, directly or indirectly, affect the maintenance of international peace and security has not declined.

The evidence tells us that in the twenty-first century the Security Council will have to step up its efforts to alleviate human suffering. Judging by the challenges of our time, the range of questions will remain rather broad and cover all the fundamental aspects of the maintenance of peace and security, including some that today we can only guess at.

The delegation of Tajikistan believes that the enormous experience acquired by the Council during the past decade, including that based on trial and error, requires in-depth analysis and reflection. With the end of the cold war, the situation on our planet has radically changed.

The number of States in which democratic forms of Government has been established has doubled. At the same time, however, humankind has witnessed numerous, often violent challenges to democratic rule.

The Security Council has energetically and creatively responded to the new political realities of our time. It was, in fact, during the last decade of the twentieth century that the Council's activity showed many new features that significantly enriched its work, including a higher level of transparency.

A study could be prepared, with the involvement of the Ambassadors of States participating in the work of the Security Council, to cover not only all aspects of the activity of this key body of the United Nations but also progress achieved in improving the working methods of the Council and non-standard approaches to resolving the complex issues facing the Council at the threshold between eras.

Let us take, for example, the Council agenda item entitled "The situation in Tajikistan and along the Tajik-Afghan border". The few brief lines of the Council's report cover the seven-year history of my country, which includes the efforts of many people and States aimed at assisting in settling the inter-Tajik conflict. Today there is peace in Tajikistan. There has been a consolidation of power, whose mandate, for the first time in our new history, has been to hold multi-party pluralist elections. There has been a strengthening of democratic institutions, making the gains of the peace process more durable, but the road to this achievement was no simple one. It required enormous political will, not only from the parties to the inter-Tajik conflict, but also from all States interested in a peaceful settlement. Tajikistan could not alone have coped with all of the problems facing it. Comprehensive international assistance and support have played an enormous role in overcoming the crisis period that Tajik society went through.

Today's meeting provides us with an excellent opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all States that have made a contribution to the establishment of peace in Tajikistan — first and foremost, this applies to the Members of the Security Council, which includes, over the years that the situation in Tajikistan was on the agenda, the representatives of more than 40 States.

We should like also to express gratitude to the Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the United Nations Secretary-General, to the leaders of United Nations groups and missions, to all the men and women who have given of their talents and themselves, and sometimes given their lives, for the cause of peace in Tajikistan.

The United Nations and the Security Council can rightfully and proudly add to the list of their positive, peacekeeping achievements the assistance they provided to Tajikistan in the pursuit of a political settlement to an armed conflict. As a direct party to the joint seven-year-long search for a formula for peace in Tajikistan, I would like to pay due tribute to the Security Council, which, in a most worthy manner, rose fully to meet the challenges of this exceedingly complex work. It is important that the Council not only assisted in the establishment of peace and stability in my country, but also responded positively, upon the conclusion of the peace process, to the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a United Nations office to promote post-conflict peace-building in Tajikistan. We are confident that the activity of that office, as well as focused support for Tajikistan from the international community, will play an important role in the economic revival of the country and will assist in the strengthening of peace and stability throughout the entire region of Central Asia.

In conclusion, allow me once again to express the highest praise for the activity of the United Nations Security Council. I would like to wish the recently elected new members of the Council — Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore — success in their extremely important activity to further the cause of peace and stability on our Earth.

Mr. Onyia (Nigeria): I should like to renew the warm congratulations of the Nigerian delegation and

reassure you, Sir, of our support and cooperation. May I also express our appreciation to the current President of the Security Council, Ambassador Martin Andjaba of Namibia, for his important statement introducing the comprehensive report of the Security Council. We equally commend the Secretariat for the quality of the report.

The report of the Security Council provides the General Assembly with an invaluable insight into the activities of the Council in the past year. Our debate on the report should reflect the cooperation that exists between these two principal organs of the United Nations charged with the promotion of international peace, security and development. As the first report of this new millennium, it deserves our special attention. This is even more true in light of the historic decisions taken by our leaders at the Millennium Summit last month. In this connection, I wish to recall that at that Summit, Member States reaffirmed their faith in the Organization and its Charter as the indispensable foundation of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.

The Security Council has, in recent times, operated and discharged its obligations under the United Nations Charter with greater sensitivity to the interests of Member States of our Organization. Significantly, the report indicates that some of the measures taken by the Council with regard to the conflict situations in the African region, particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia/Eritrea and Sierra Leone, are beginning to have some salutary effects.

We wish to commend the Security Council for the initiative of sending Council members to conflict areas in different parts of the world. In our continent, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke of the United States led a team to Central and East Africa last April. Another team of the Council, led by Ambassador Jeremy Greenstock of the United Kingdom, has just returned from West Africa as part of the search for durable peace and security in that subregion. These visits have certainly exposed members of the Council to the challenges present in the theatre of conflict, as well as boosted the morale of peacekeepers, whom we highly commend for their selfless service and sacrifice.

In our region, we have also endeavoured to maintain regular contacts and consultations with the Security Council. It is important to recall that some African leaders met with members of the Council in January of this year concerning the restoration of lasting peace to the Great Lakes region, particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Twice, the Council was honoured by the presence of President Nelson Mandela, who is deploying his best efforts to bring peace to Burundi. Last June, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Ministerial Mediation and Security Committee on Sierra Leone, led by the Malian Foreign Minister, Mr. Modibo Sidibe, held extensive consultation with Council members on the current situation in Sierra Leone.

Undoubtedly, the close consultation resulting from these visits and contacts has contributed to a greater appreciation of all the issues involved in the conflicts in our region. In addition, it has played a significant role in renewing the confidence of our subregion and, indeed, our continent, that the Security Council is truly responsible for international peace and security. This approach of holding consultations with regional leaders should therefore be sustained.

Our efforts at addressing conflict situations in the world, especially in Africa, will not yield the desired results unless we can confront new security challenges posed by poverty and disease, intolerance and discrimination, human rights abuses and disregard of the rule of law. Happily, it is gratifying to note that the Security Council is increasingly turning its attention to non-military threats to international peace and security, such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The Nigerian delegation is of the view that malaria poses as great a threat as HIV/AIDS to international peace and security and therefore invites the Security Council to address this scourge.

It is equally reassuring that the Security Council is seized with the problems arising from children and women in armed conflicts. The concern of the international community with these problems has been amply captured in the report of Ambassador Olara Otunnu. We commend him for all his efforts to sensitize the world community to the plight of children in armed conflict. The international community needs to be more forceful in bringing to justice all those who commit war crimes, particularly against women and children. It is our firm belief that, once it is generally acknowledged across the globe that such crimes will not go unpunished, the potential perpetrators of such heinous crimes will be deterred.

In Africa, we have initiated measures to address the root causes of conflicts with a strong commitment to launching the continent on the path of sustainable development. Within the past year, the ministerial Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa has been established to enhance and reinforce our capacity for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts within the framework of the Organization of African Unity. We are confident that this initiative will receive the desired support of the international community.

Another area of concern that requires the immediate attention of the international community is the current political situation in our subregion, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Liberia. We hope that the recent visit of members of the Council to the subregion will contribute to the amicable resolution of the differences between Liberia and Guinea. In our view, members of the Security Council can and should play a major role in supporting the efforts of ECOWAS and African leaders in the peaceful resolution of the current crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. In this respect, preventive diplomacy dictates that the United Nations should take urgent measures to reinforce the efforts of ECOWAS and African leaders, such as the deployment of a good-offices mission to that country.

In recent years, States members of the Economic Community of West African States have demonstrated the political will to assume responsibility for peace and security in our subregion. ECOWAS leaders have actively participated in the search for peace in crisis-torn countries. They have, in the past few years, deployed peacekeeping forces within the subregion at enormous cost in men and matériel. Our experience in Liberia and Sierra Leone has proved that such regional peacekeeping operations, undertaken by ECOWAS through its Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), can be effective tools for the maintenance of international peace and security, thereby complementing the work of the Council, as envisaged under the Charter. We therefore urge that such regional initiatives receive commensurate support to enable them discharge their mandate.

One positive development that deserves commendation is the smooth transition between the ECOWAS peacekeeping operation, ECOMOG, and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone. This clearly shows that, where there is political will, subregional and regional organizations and the United Nations can work together in furtherance of international peace and security. The role of the Secretary-General in facilitating this process should be commended.

The experience of our Organization in the area of peacekeeping and peace-building over the years has demonstrated the urgency of the need to review and strengthen the mechanism for achieving our shared goals in this vital area. We therefore commend the Secretary-General for his foresight in constituting the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, to address the attendant challenges. The Panel's recommendations deserve careful attention, particularly those aspects that seek to protect and maintain the integrity of the United Nations peacekeeping forces. As a troop-contributing country, Nigeria is of the firm belief that Member States should never tolerate situations in which the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers are compromised. This commitment we owe to the brave and dedicated officers and men, as well as the civilian personnel, who serve under the United Nations blue beret.

The reform of the Security Council constitutes one of the major challenges facing the United Nations in the new millennium. We reiterate that, for the Council to discharge its Charter obligations effectively, it must be truly representative of the States Members of this Organization. It should continue to improve its working methods and make them transparent for the benefit of all countries. That is the only way that the Council can enhance the legitimacy of its decisions, as well as attract the broad support of Member States.

May I at this juncture extend the warm congratulations of the Nigerian delegation to the newly elected non-permanent members of the Security Council for the period 2001-2002: Mauritius, Singapore, Colombia, Ireland and Norway.

In conclusion, I wish to convey the appreciation of the Government and people of Nigeria to the Secretary-General for the efforts he has deployed and continues to deploy towards the resolution of conflicts across the globe, particularly on our continent.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): I wish to thank Ambassador Martin Andjaba, President of the Security Council, for his presentation of the fifty-fifth annual report of the Council. The consideration of the report provides a formal occasion for the General Assembly to deliberate on the work of the Security Council — its

substantive content and the working methods. We shall try to give our impression of the Council's work as an elected member since January this year.

Before we start, however, let me convey our warmest congratulations to the newly elected members of the Council: Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore. We look forward to working closely with them in the Council.

The reporting period — mid-June 1999 to mid-July 2000 — represents significant developments in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security. First, the period saw the Council playing a more proactive role. This has been discernible from the Council's assumption of primary responsibility in major crisis situations: Kosovo, East Timor, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In Kosovo, the United Nations has assumed an Interim Administration Mission. In East Timor, the United Nations is providing for transitional administration, assisting the people to emerge as an independent nation. In Sierra Leone the Council has authorized the largest of the current peacekeeping operations. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo it mandated a sizeable peacekeeping mission to assist implementation of the Lusaka ceasefire agreement. However, the deployment and operation of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been facing difficulties, as the parties to the peace agreement have failed to commit themselves to its effective implementation.

Elsewhere, the Council remained actively seized of the situations and took appropriate action. The Council mission to Dili and Jakarta led by Ambassador Andjaba has been crowned with success. Earlier this year, the Council demonstrated its active pursuit of peace by sending a special mission to Kosovo. It sent another mission of critical importance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the subregion under the leadership of Ambassador Holbrooke. The mission was also dispatched on an emergency basis to Ethiopia and Eritrea before the outbreak of war in that part of the world.

These initiatives notwithstanding, the Council's inability to act on the situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia in time has been criticized, perhaps justly so. Bangladesh, an elected member, made its endeavours in vain for Council action before another conflagration took place. The Council did assign its Democratic Republic of the Congo mission to make ultimate démarches at Asmara and Addis Ababa. But if the initiative was not considered too little, it appeared to come too late. The responsibilities are, as we all know, shared. The war in the Horn demonstrated once again the need for closer coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations under the provisions of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter.

Secondly, we note a substantive evolution in the Council's perception of peace and security. The Security Council, as has been argued, is no longer seen as a fire brigade, acting only when a conflict flares up. During the period under review, the Council devoted a considerable amount of its time and attention to areas beyond peacekeeping — conflict prevention, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building.

The challenge of maintaining international peace and security is now recognized as a continuing process requiring an integrated approach and involving all actors. There is a growing recognition that while the Security Council has the primary responsibility in matters of war and peace, all other organs of the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions, the regional and subregional organizations, the non-governmental organizations and other members of civil society have their role and responsibility in promoting and sustaining international peace and security. Bangladesh has contributed to the evolving trend, including during our presidency of the Council in March.

The concept of international peace and security has been revisited during several open debates that focused on protection of civilians in armed conflict, humanitarian issues before the Council and protection of children in armed conflict. The question of State sovereignty and humanitarian intervention was raised in this context. The debates have revealed that peace and security should ultimately be conceived in terms of human security.

The third major development we would note is the growing collaboration between and among the major organs of the United Nations, specialized agencies and other bodies and the Bretton Woods institutions. It is recognized that durable peace cannot be achieved without effectively addressing the root causes of conflicts. It is also recognized that each of the actors has its respective role to play.

The decisions and deliberations of the General Assembly have found greater reflection in the work of the Council, and cooperation between the two bodies has expanded. In the context of collaboration between the General Assembly and the Security Council, we would mention the participation by three Council Presidents in the 8 March meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council.

The Council's continued commitment to and support of post-conflict peace-building support missions are examples of the exercise of responsibility shared with the Secretary-General, the Economic and Social Council and the specialized agencies.

The Secretary-General has remained deeply involved in the work of the Council, participating in its deliberations, sharing information and analysis, providing advice and bringing his own contribution to the peace efforts. His initiative in having a seminal report on United Nations peace operations by the Brahimi panel has been greeted as an outstanding contribution. The Council has deepened the scope of free exchange of views with the Secretary-General through such mechanisms as the monthly luncheon, tour d'horizon meetings, monthly wrap-up sessions and the annual retreat with the Council members.

The growing cooperation with non-governmental organizations is a distinct and welcome development. The Council has recognized the need for an effective partnership by engaging in dialogue with the non-governmental organizations in its Arria Formula meetings.

The fourth area of notable forward movement is the sanctions regime. The sanctions regimes and their effectiveness and impact formed one of the major concerns voiced in the General Assembly. The Security Council has set up for the first time in its history a Working Group on General Issues on Sanctions. The deliberations of the Working Group are expected to produce practical recommendations for streamlining sanctions regimes and setting standards for United Nations sanctions.

In addition, the implementation of recommendations contained in the 29 January 1999 note by the President of the Security Council will be treated as an independent item along with the clusters agreed upon by the Council.

There has been remarkable progress in making some of the sanctions regimes more effective and more targeted, those in respect of Angola and Sierra Leone in particular. Ambassador Heinbecker of Canada referred to these positive developments.

The fifth area on which I would say a few words concerns transparency, openness and participation. Ambassador Powles of New Zealand focused on the issues in great detail. As the statistics show, during the period of the report, the Council had 144 public meetings and 194 informal consultations. This is significant change compared to the previous year, when it had only 121 public meetings as opposed to 239 informal consultations.

The briefing of the non-members of the Council by the presidency has been greeted as a real-time transparency. During Bangladesh's presidency we briefed the non-members after each informal consultations, without exception. This was part of our commitment to the broader membership to keep them properly informed of the substantive content of the discussion at the informal consultations. By raising the level from our side we hoped to attract greater participation of the broader membership for whom the briefing is meant. We would strongly plead for strengthening this institution as a forum for information exchange between the Council and the broader membership.

During the Bangladesh presidency, we submitted draft notes proposing improvement in some aspects of the Council's documentation and procedures. The Council agreed on the basis of our proposal for distribution of the text of statements within the Council Chamber to all participants, thus making copies of statements instantly available to all members.

As a member of the Council, we have actively sought to promote wider participation of the broader membership in the work of the Council. The participation of members of the Peace Implementation Council in the open briefing on Bosnia and Herzegovina marked a departure from the oft-followed practice of having consultations or private meetings on the issue. The holding of a public meeting on the humanitarian situation in Iraq marked a major breakthrough in several years on this issue. Public meetings were held on such sensitive issues as Angola

sanctions. We believe that Council meetings on consideration of the reports of the Secretary-General that are public documents can be also held in public. The public meetings on East Timor, Tajikistan and Guinea-Bissau held in March followed this logic.

We have touched briefly on some of the major trends and developments in the Security Council and its work. First and foremost, the Security Council will be evaluated on its success in peacekeeping. Members of the Council, meeting at the highest level on 7 September, expressed their commitment to that end. But the Council cannot do it alone.

The Security Council Working Group on the Brahimi Panel report (S/2000/809) is examining the recommendations on matters within the Council's responsibilities. The Council will certainly agree to most of the recommendations, and it will possibly reach consensus on transforming them into decisions. But most of the recommendations will remain on the shelf, unless conditions for their effective implementation are met.

The removal of the budget cap is fundamental to any substantive forward movement in this regard. Resolution of the question of the scale of assessment will also be essential. We believe that this issue can be resolved with a courageous, open-minded and positive approach. For us, strengthening the United Nations should be the primary consideration.

A basic problem facing peace operations is the commitment gap in terms of troops and other personnel, particularly civilian police. The problem of equipment is also serious. These problems cannot be resolved by procedural manoeuvres. Their resolution will require the assumption of shared responsibility by all Members of the Organization in accordance with their undertaking in Article 43 of the Charter.

In recent months increased emphasis has been placed on the deployment of well-trained, well-equipped and well-motivated troops. The Brahimi recommendations for a clear, credible and achievable mandate and robust rules of engagement for peacekeepers to protect themselves and other mission components have strengthened that demand. In military doctrine, the United Nations peacekeeping forces must have effective deterrent capability.

The question arises: Where do these troops come from? We believe that participation by the most capable Members of the United Nations is essential in order to render peace operations credible and achievable. One way to close the commitment gap would be to have each of the permanent members of the Council — given their special status, responsibility and capacity — contribute 5 per cent of the troops required for any peacekeeping mission, thus providing 25 per cent of the total needed. That would ensure a quarter of the well-trained, well-equipped and well-motivated troops. They would be ready for rapid deployment, and would bring the power of deterrence as well as the capacity for emergency rescue and evacuation.

Let me conclude by saying that saving people from the scourge of war is the basic purpose of the United Nations. The objective is to create a situation allowing the employment of international machinery and resources for the economic and social advancement of all peoples. Bangladesh will continue to play an active role in promoting this objective.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) *(spoke in Arabic)*: At the outset my delegation would like to thank the President of the Security Council for the month of October, Ambassador Andjaba of Namibia, for his comprehensive report on the work of the Council covering the period from 16 June 1999 to 15 June 2000.

It is also my pleasure once again to extend my congratulations to the delegations of Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore on their election as non-permanent members of the Council. We are sure that they will discharge their tasks in a way that will strengthen the work of the Council.

Consideration of the report provides an opportunity to strengthen relations between the Security Council and the General Assembly in the maintenance of peace and international security, as it is also the major mechanism under the Charter for the follow-up and evaluation of the work that the Council carries out on behalf of Member States and in implementation of their recommendations and decisions. The report includes the Council's intensive activities over the year that has just elapsed in the context of its discharge of its responsibilities in the area of international peace and security.

We are gratified to note that the Council has given due priority, as required by the community of States, to the settlement of disputes in Africa. I also note with satisfaction the new orientation of the

Council in discharging its tasks and in recovering its role regarding problems that have been outstanding for many years, particularly the implementation of Security Council resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978), by which Lebanon has been able to restore its sovereignty in southern Lebanon.

The fact that the Council is discharging its responsibilities regarding events in Palestinian occupied territory by adopting Security Council resolution 1322 (2000), with its request to the Secretary-General for a close follow-up of the situation, is an important indication of the pivotal role of the Council in considering issues of peace and security. This responsibility of the Council is indispensable and cannot be marginalized.

We also take note of the increased awareness of the Council of the challenges faced by the international community in the area of peace and international security. The summit meeting held by the Council on 7 September was an opportunity for identifying these challenges and for taking the necessary measures to ensure the effectiveness of its role in this vital field especially in Africa.

We hope that during consideration of the issues before it the Council will hold to the commitments of the summit, in accordance with the letter of the Charter, and will step up cooperation with other United Nations bodies — in particular, the General Assembly. It should do so on the understanding that the maintenance of international peace and security is a multidimensional concept that requires the intervention of various specialized organs of the United Nations in terms of an integral and global strategy aimed at preventing conflicts and putting an end to their root causes, which are economic and social factors — above all, poverty and marginalization.

Moreover, we hope that the Council and the Assembly will attach due attention to the recommendations of the Brahimi report (S/2000/809) on peacekeeping issues and will consider those recommendations in depth, in order to take the necessary measures and decisions based on the principle of collective responsibility for issues of peace and security throughout the world.

This report, issued at approximately the time of the holding of the Millennium Summit and the Council Summit, shows that there is a dialectic within the issues of international peace and security in the light of the new problem before us, and shows how to tackle this problem in a more realistic manner, given the specific characteristics of each conflict and area of tension.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm our principled commitment to international peace and security and our support for peacekeeping operations, in which we have been participating since the 1960s.

Like other delegations, we are aware of the progress made in the working methods of the Council and efforts to increase its transparency. We support this approach, which has become evident in many plenary meetings during the period covered by the report. We have also noted that the Council has made use of direct consultations with parties to conflict at high levels, which can improve decision-making mechanisms in the Council. The measures undertaken by the Council to improve its working methods have often contributed to helping it carry out its responsibilities in a more effective and positive manner by listening to the viewpoints of the parties to conflict.

We believe that sending Security Council missions to areas of conflict is one of the Council's working methods that have made it possible for members to become aware of developments in such areas of conflict and to adopt the necessary strategies to settle these effectively, especially since reports of these missions have been discussed at plenary meetings with the participation of Member States of the Organization.

Finally, it is important that the Council discharge its mandates more effectively. This requires greater transparency, particularly when we take into account the great number of issues under consideration and the need to resolve them effectively. We attach great importance to the need to consider the proposals made within the framework of the General Assembly Working Group on Security Council reform in order to strengthen its credibility. We hope that by enhancing the transparency of its work we shall make the Council's working methods more effective.

In this context, we believe that the Council should do the following: first, improve the annual report so that it is no longer a ritual presentation of resolutions and decisions adopted, but rather an analysis, allowing non-members to familiarize themselves with the motives behind the Council's decisions and positions; secondly, allow non-members

to participate in its work by holding more plenary meetings open to all Members of the United Nations; thirdly, respect Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter, concerning the participation of non-members that are parties to disputes under consideration or that have interests at stake, to enable them to participate in the work of the Council during consideration of such disputes; fourthly, intensify direct consultations between the Council and troop-contributing countries at all stages of maintaining peace, particularly when changing the mandate of such peacekeeping operations; and, fifthly, improve sanctions regimes so that they may achieve the desired results by imposing binding measures in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Charter.

In this context, we would like to emphasize the need to make recommendations on sanctions regimes within the relevant Working Group and to submit them to the Council. We emphasize the importance of setting standards and objectives for those sanctions as well as a temporal framework and mechanisms for lifting sanctions, especially considering their harmful effects on the people of the targeted country as well as on third countries. Once again, we urge the Council to implement the mechanism in Article 50 of the Charter in this regard. In any case, the Council's initiative for suspending sanctions against Libya has had a positive effect. This is a timely initiative on the path to a final and complete lifting of sanctions.

The challenges posed by peace and security require greater cooperation and coordination between principal United Nations bodies and a strengthened role of the Council to meet the needs of Member States through greater transparency in its working methods and by guaranteeing better representation, in accordance with the will of the international community. This must be done with respect to the mandates of the various United Nations bodies in accordance with the Charter. My delegation hopes that the Council will include these principles in its upcoming reports, as well as the will to take into consideration the constructive ideas submitted by Member States.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): Let me begin by expressing our appreciation to the Permanent Representative of Namibia, Ambassador Martin Andjaba, for introducing the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. We attach great importance to the presentation of the report, pursuant to Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter, which entrust the General Assembly with considering the account of measures the Security Council takes to maintain international peace and security. This responsibility emanates essentially from Article 11, which authorizes the General Assembly to consider general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Article 24 of the Charter states that the Members of the United Nations confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. As we enter the new millennium, there is a need to reflect on how the extent to which the Security Council has fulfilled its Charter obligations in creating a secure and peaceful global environment.

There is a widely held view that the Security Council has finally come out of its cold-war inertia. It now meets more often and seems to be performing a more proactive role than before, though not necessarily a more effective one. Hence, there is considerable scope for further improvement.

In the post-cold-war era, the number of internecine and intra-State conflicts, and their devastation, has increased manifold, which is a matter of concern to all of us. At the same time, long-standing disputes and conflicts in various parts of the world remain unresolved. We believe that the intensity and number of conflicts could be minimized if a sufficient degree of commitment, concern, engagement, objectivity and even-handedness were demonstrated by the Security Council. The Council is empowered to call upon parties to settle their disputes, for which ways and means are provided in the Charter — including a mechanism for conflict prevention. Responsibility in this regard should not be evaded on the pretext that disputes should be resolved only bilaterally by the parties concerned. If that were the case, then the question would arise as to what the role of the Security Council is in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Selectivity in the implementation of Security Council resolutions has also raised serious questions about its credibility and authority. The general impression that the Council applies different standards to conflicts in different parts of the world must not be allowed to become a general conviction. All resolutions of the Council must be implemented

without any discrimination. The Jammu and Kashmir dispute, involving the destiny of 10 million people, is a case in point, where the Council's resolutions pledging them their right to self-determination have remained unimplemented for over half a century. The progress achieved in East Timor must serve as a model for resolving the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir, in conformity with the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

The Security Council has also been subjected to criticism recently for not having been able to put up rapid and effective responses to crisis situations. This has been so owing to various reasons, including lack of determination on the part of the members of the Council. The report of the Brahimi Panel has aptly highlighted that point. We would like to emphasize the need for early and effective responses to crisis situations, irrespective of their geographical location. Such a course of action would obviate the possibility of bypassing the Security Council, as we observed during the crisis in Kosovo, due to differing perceptions among its members.

The credibility of the Security Council is undermined each time it ignores a conflict and leaves it to the parties to resolve, or when regional organizations are asked to field for the United Nations. While cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations should be improved, we firmly believe that regional organizations can play only a limited role in the prevention of armed conflict, in consonance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. It is the Security Council that has the primary responsibility for conflict prevention and dispute resolution.

We are disappointed at the failure of the Security Council to list political disputes as one of the root causes of conflict in its presidential statement issued after its open debate on 20 July 2000. That statement listed only economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems as the root causes of armed conflicts. Is that the reality? This is not an adequate assessment of ongoing conflicts. The Secretary-General's notification to the General Assembly, contained in document A/55/366, pursuant to Article 12 of the Charter, which we considered in this forum earlier this week, lists all the issues that are on the agenda of the Security Council — the overwhelming number of which are political in nature.

We have also noted recently a growing propensity to expand the role of the Security Council beyond its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security. Efforts are being made to broaden the Council's agenda by including HIV/AIDS, civilians and children in armed conflict, women and peace and security, protection of humanitarian and United Nations personnel, human rights, international law and disarmament issues. These subjects clearly fall in the domain of the General Assembly and its various bodies.

Another aspect that needs in-depth review is the issue of sanctions imposed by the Security Council, because of their enormous adverse impact on common people. It is an established fact that sanctions often tend to violate the fundamental rights of common people in targeted countries, such as the right to live, the right to freedom from hunger, the right to education and the right to development. We therefore hesitate to subscribe to the view that there can be any so-called smart sanctions.

I will now briefly touch upon some of the current working practices of the Security Council. Closed-door, or informal, consultations remain the rule rather than the exception for meetings of the Security Council. Open, or public, meetings take place only after behind-doors agreements have been reached. In the process, we have witnessed the invisible use of the veto time and again. This practice of informal consultations runs contrary to the requirements of transparency and accountability.

Another recent innovation in Council meetings is the holding of open thematic debates. We wonder about the utility of such meetings. As we understand it, that practice was introduced to enable Member States to express their views on any given theme or issue, which then would be taken into account by the Council at the time of decision-making. In reality, in most cases members of the Council finalize draft resolutions or presidential statements in advance of the holding of an open meeting. The script is already decided, only to be subsequently enacted. In the event, such debates in an open meeting become a sterile exercise in which Member States are heard but not listened to. The United Nations, which is facing grave and real challenges of peace and security, cannot afford this dramatization.

Having said that, I must also place on record our appreciation to the members of the Council who have contributed to bringing about greater transparency in

the Council's working methods and practices. That trend needs to be further encouraged and reinforced. In our view, these progressive changes will strengthen the credibility of the Security Council.

During the Millennium Summit, our heads of State or Government issued a call for the comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. Such reform must encompass the issues of expansion, of the Council's decision-making and the related question of the veto, and of the Council's working methods. In our view, the objective of the reform exercise should be to make the Council more democratic, representative, participatory and accountable. Special powers and prerogatives are anachronistic and are not consistent with the principle of sovereign equality or with the values that provide the legal and moral basis of the Charter of the United Nations. There is no room for an increase in the existing oligarchy within the Council. We must avoid aggravating the existing imbalance. The general membership's trust and confidence in the Security Council can be reinforced only by strengthening the Council's democratic and participatory character.

I would like in conclusion to congratulate Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore on their election to membership of the Council last week. We look forward to working very closely with them in pursuit of global peace, security and prosperity. I would also like to pay tribute to the outgoing members of the Council for their important contribution to enhancing the role and effectiveness of the Council and to the promotion of international peace and security.

Mr. Erwa (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): As this is my first statement before the historic Millennium Assembly, I wish warmly to congratulate Mr. Harri Holkeri of Finland on his election to the presidency of the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session. We are fully confident that he will lead our deliberations to a successful outcome. I take this opportunity also to congratulate the States that were elected last week to membership of the Security Council, and to wish them every success. My thanks go to the outgoing members of the Council for all their efforts in the service of international peace and security, which we greatly appreciate.

I am sure that all members will recall that one of the most important elements of the Millennium Declaration was its reaffirmation of the need to enhance the central position of the General Assembly within the United Nations system. We believe that it up to us, at this Millennium Assembly, to translate the words of the Declaration into reality.

That is the context in which I shall address the item entitled "Report of the Security Council". I call for improvements in the report so that it can contribute to enhancing the role of the General Assembly. Before turning to details, let me thank Ambassador Martin Andjaba, Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations and current President of the Security Council, for his introduction of the Council's report (A/55/2) to the General Assembly.

States Members of the United Nations have the right to ample and comprehensive information about the activities of the Security Council at the proper time, when that information is needed to enable them, through the General Assembly, to participate effectively in the search for solutions to threats to international peace and security. That, unfortunately, is not the case at present. All that is available is this annual report to the General Assembly, and this does not give rise to vital, effective interaction between these two important organs — the General Assembly and the Security Council — in keeping with the hopes of the entire international community. In our view, one of the most important factors limiting the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council is the nature of this annual report. Besides being submitted only once a year, it is no more than a chronological listing of the items and matters before the Security Council, and contains no explanation of what took place on the sidelines during the informal meetings that have in fact become the basis of the Council's work.

Unless it fully reflects the deliberations of the members of the Council in their informal meetings and contains details about how resolutions came to be adopted, the report will be of little importance and of little practical use to the Assembly, and will only confirm the belief held by many both within and outside the United Nations that the Council's work is marked by secrecy and a lack of transparency. Let me recall an article that appeared in *The New York Times* of 6 March 1998 on the Security Council's culture of secrecy.

As we carefully followed the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council over the past four years, we submitted a number of practical proposals on enhancing and promoting the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council. These included consultations between the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council, with regular meetings whenever an event occurs that needs the participation of the entire membership of the United Nations to find a solution. Unfortunately, such meetings have not taken place. We also proposed periodic reports to the General Assembly, whenever necessary; nor has this proposal been implemented.

Article 24 of the Charter, which entrusts the Security Council with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, on behalf of all the Members of the United Nations, also requires the Council to submit annual, and, when necessary, special or periodic reports to the General Assembly in order to enable it to consider those vital matters relating to international peace and security.

The purpose of the Charter in this respect is very clear: that the Security Council's mandate has been given to it by all the States Members of the United Nations, which are represented by the General Assembly. Consequently, it is incumbent on the Council to submit to the General Assembly detailed reports on its work. However, this has not occurred, and the only report submitted is this annual report, which, as we said earlier, is simply a compilation of documents issued by the Council over the course of the past year. It does not reflect any essential elements that would be useful in clarifying what took place during the Council's meetings or in its subsidiary organs, such as the sanctions committees and other entities.

A large number of delegations have, on more than one occasion, stated that in their view this annual report does not contain an in-depth assessment of how the Council deals with the vital topics under consideration and that it is not useful in its present form and does not allow the General Assembly to undertake a careful examination and an in-depth analysis of, and consequently submit recommendations on, matters related to international peace and security.

Certain matters in the report must be attended to so as to achieve the desired interaction between the General Assembly and the Council. For instance, there must be an explanation of how resolutions were adopted in the Council. Here I should like to quote the former Permanent Representative of Italy, my friend, Ambassador Fulci, who, speaking about the way resolutions are adopted in the Council, said:

> "I think that we are entitled to know who said what in the Security Council."

There is yet another issue that should in future be reflected clearly in the report: to what extent is consideration given to General Assembly resolutions concerning issues of joint interest to both the Assembly and the Council when such issues are discussed in the Council, and is due consideration given to them in the process of adopting a resolution?

In conclusion, I should like once again to affirm that the Sudan, as one of the first African States to participate in peacekeeping operations, beginning in the early 1960s, and in its capacity as an active and participating member of the peacekeeping operations, would like to reconfirm its commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security and its willingness to participate in such activities in future.

Mr. Balzan (Malta): The delegation of Malta would like to express its gratitude to the Permanent Representative of Namibia, Ambassador Andjaba, for his comprehensive and informative presentation of the annual report of the Security Council. Allow me also to offer to the members of the Secretariat our sincere thanks for the significant work and effort that must have gone into the publication of this year's voluminous report.

May I also extend our congratulations to the representatives of the newly elected non-permanent members of the Security Council and wish them every success in the discharge of their responsibilities. Our tribute goes also to the outgoing members for their most relevant contribution to the work of the Council.

Last year, when my delegation took the floor to speak about the report of the Security Council for the years 1997-1998, we stressed the need for the members of the Council to work not in their own interests but in the interests of the international community as a whole. My delegation had then also pointed out the Council's

recent failures in fulfilling its role as the guarantor of peace and security on this planet.

If the first step in addressing a problem is to decipher its true nature and root causes, the publication of the incisive reports of the Secretary-General on the Organization's dismal performance in Rwanda and Srebrenica was indeed the right point of departure.

On the basis of these findings as well as the experience and dedication of its members, the high-level Panel charged with the review of United Nations peace and security activities was able to take us to the next step, with the presentation of what has become known as the Brahimi report. This incisive and forthright document provides us with clear indications of the tough decisions that need to be taken if the United Nations is to obtain for itself the political, technical, organizational and procedural means to fulfil the peacekeeping mandate that makes up the lion's share of the work of the Security Council.

The Brahimi report points in no unclear terms to the present methods of work and practices of the Security Council which need to be reformed or entirely replaced. It is of primary importance to ensure that the mandates emanating from the Security Council are realistic in view of the history of the situation at hand, the present realities on the ground and the real, as opposed to fictional, resources available to the United Nations.

The Panel's suggestion that the Council resolutions specifying troop levels be kept in draft form until the Secretary-General is assured of their actual availability is certainly worthy of serious consideration. The procedural changes in the modus operandi of the Security Council may be challenging to implement, but it is the Panel's call for the Council to exercise more judgement that is likely to prove the most challenging to satisfy. The Council should not mistake its duty to employ a policy of impartiality for an approach in which it divests itself of the obligation to point a finger when the actions of one or another party to a conflict so demand.

Malta shares the Panel's reading of the situation when it states that:

> "No failure did more to damage the standing and credibility of United Nations peacekeeping in the 1990s than its reluctance to distinguish victim from aggressor." *(A/55/305, p. ix)*

My delegation believes that to lay the blame for peacekeeping failures solely at the doorstep of the Security Council would be to misunderstand the depth of the changes that must take place throughout this Organization if this reform is to succeed.

There is no doubt that the Charter of the United Nations places a very particular responsibility on those who are elected to the Council and, by virtue of their permanent membership of the Council, even more burdensome demands on five particular States. Nevertheless, the dearth of resources at the disposal of the Organization charged with a fast-growing peacekeeping responsibility calls for a renewed commitment from all of us. It is this reality that led the Prime Minister of Malta, in his address to the Millennium Summit, to intimate Malta's intention to significantly increase its contribution to the peacekeeping budget.

My delegation is encouraged to note that a Security Council committee has already begun to deliberate on the manner in which the recommendations of the Brahimi report pertinent to the Security Council can be implemented. My delegation looks forward to reading about the implementation of these recommendations in forthcoming report of the Council.

The ongoing discussions within the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform have not yet achieved any tangible results insofar as an increase in the membership of the Council is concerned. However, not a few proposals were put forward and agreed upon with respect to the Council's working methods. My delegation welcomes the manner in which the Council has implemented some of these new working methods before their formal adoption, as well as the increased interaction between the Council and the troop-contributing countries.

If the non-members of the Security Council are to better appreciate what leads the Council to take decisions that they are often called on to implement, it is crucial that, to the extent practicable, its deliberations take place in a transparent manner.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that the success of the Security Council's actions depends very much on the level of credibility and respect that it commands. In enhancing its level of transparency, the Council would be moving in the right direction.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): It is an honour for me to address the Members of this Organization on the annual report of the Security Council. It is a particular privilege to thank the President of the Security Council, my friend and colleague, Ambassador Martin Andjaba of Namibia, for introducing it.

Before we discuss the report, we wish to express our sincere gratitude to the outgoing non-permanent Council members for their dedication, and to warmly welcome the newly elected members. We thank those Council members who continue to brief non-members on the issues before the Council and who regularly consult with us. We are sure that the new members will continue to follow the commitment displayed by their predecessors and will continue to work with the wider United Nations membership on the issues on the Security Council agenda.

We wish to reaffirm the role of the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security. We believe that when we address issues of poverty and underdevelopment, we also minimize the potential for conflict. The Council needs to be infused with a fresh sense of urgency and renewed commitment to fulfil its mandate of maintaining international peace and security. We need the Council to create conditions of peace and security so that we can nurture them and pursue the critical task of alleviating poverty and promoting development. The continuous growth of the work undertaken by the Council signifies to us how far we have yet to go to achieve the goals of peace, security and development.

As we review the discussions held by our heads of State and Government during the Millennium Summit, including the round-table discussions and the Security Council Summit, we need to focus on the task of implementation and actions which give meaning to those important discussions. We welcome the establishment of the Security Council working group on the Brahimi report. We hope the Council will fulfil its Summit pledge, "to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in addressing conflict at all stages from prevention to settlement to post-conflict peace-building".

The Security Council now faces the twin challenges of dealing with a larger number of situations threatening international peace and security, and more complex situations involving more than mere military deployment. This demands a deeper examination of the different needs of each situation and a greater commitment of political will and necessary resources to prevent and end conflicts. The Council's recent open debates on the prevention of armed conflicts is a welcome starting point.

We note that the Security Council, in conjunction with other United Nations bodies, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, has also addressed a wider range of challenges which may threaten peace and security, such as the spread of communicable diseases like HIV/AIDS, the use of children in armed conflict, disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation, and the protection of civilians. We further note that other issues that received serious consideration in the Council include the need to improve the protection of humanitarian personnel and the need to safeguard natural resources, particularly from illegal exploitation, as well as the role that such exploitation plays in fostering instability and conflict.

We would like to see the Council support a total prohibition on the use of anti-personnel landmines, as well as efforts to prevent the proliferation of and illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. These weapons are not only used in conflict situations, but they are also the weapons of choice of drug smugglers and poachers long after conflicts have been resolved. These weapons are involved in the killing of many more innocent people than have ever been killed by weapons of mass destruction.

We welcome the renewed focus on dealing with conflict in Africa, but we remain concerned that the political will and resources are not sufficiently forthcoming to match the rhetoric. The move towards democratization and sustainable development will promote peace and stability. The vicious cycle we face, however, is that democracy and sustainable development also depend on peace and stability in order to flourish. For example, disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation programmes can succeed in the longer term only if we address the needs of peace-building and poverty alleviation. The international community's responsibility, therefore, cannot simply end with the cessation of hostilities or even with elections; sustained assistance for good governance and economic development through post-conflict support are also required.

The mandate of the Council requires varied responses, including making peace, keeping peace and

sustaining the peace. There is clearly a need for the Council to review the modalities of applying sanctions in order to protect civilian populations from prolonged suffering and also from being punished for the crimes of others who caused the suffering in the first place. Sanctions are an instrument that should be used only after careful consideration of their impact and should be targeted carefully to effectively achieve the desired outcome.

In the Middle East, the Security Council has a responsibility, not only in terms of its own resolutions but also in terms of observing international instruments, such as the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. The Non-Aligned Movement summit held in Durban in 1998 reiterated that the observance of these international instruments would relieve the suffering and provide protection to all victims. Surely the Security Council cannot ignore the call, in article 1 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, "to respect and to ensure respect for the present Convention in all circumstances".

Post-conflict societies cannot by themselves undo the effects of conflict, as well as repair the damage done by sanctions to infrastructure and the economy. The biggest hurdle faced by developing countries in post-conflict situations is to overcome isolation and to stimulate investment and economic growth. Otherwise, new-found freedom can very quickly give rise to further instability. It is necessary to recognize the full extent to which the issuing of resolutions and getting involved in conflict situations requires the commitment and involvement of the international community, the conflicting parties and also the victims of conflict.

We commend the Council for the increased use of open debates and open briefings on the work of the Council. Thematic debates are, of course, essential, but we are pleased to note the trend towards addressing practical issues. As examples, the open briefings on Kosovo and East Timor helped to keep United Nations members abreast of developments and better able to support and affect the work of the Council. We believe that it was important for Member States to have been present for such important briefings as that of Mrs. Ogata, the High Commissioner for Refugees, and to have participated in the debate on the role of the Security Council in the prevention of conflicts.

The present report provides us with a compendium of the work done by the Council during the past year, but once again it fails to give an analysis of the issues and the Council's performance. It is essential for the Council to provide such analysis, because the Council is accountable to the General Assembly. The failure of the report indicates a lack, or an unwillingness, to engage in this critical aspect of review and accountability. This, of course, would raise the issues of the necessity to reform the working methods of the Council and the great need for transparency and accountability, which we all can agree is an important element of giving the Council the credibility it must have. Certainly, after seven years of debate on the reform of the Council, we should be able to recognize the challenges we are faced with and be bold enough to make the necessary reforms.

In conclusion, let us recall that, during the Millennium Summit, our heads of State and Government acknowledged the importance of addressing the uneven distribution of the benefits of globalization. Our deliberations and decisions have to result in better living conditions for those who suffer aggression and violations of their most basic rights. While the Security Council does not have direct responsibility for development issues, or even the sole responsibility to protect civilians, the Council cannot be absolved from the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. We should not forget that many people, mostly civilians, are dying daily in conflicts in Africa and elsewhere. However, the absence of conflict will not solve the daily struggle faced by those same people in the face of poverty and disease. We cannot claim to have any higher priority for this Organization than to muster the collective will and the necessary resources to end their suffering.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.